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OVER PERISCOPE POND

Marjorie Crocker Esther Sayles Root

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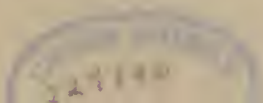
BY ESTHER SAYLES ROOT
AND MARJORIE CROCKER

BOSTON & NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY



OVER PERISCOPE POND

Letters
from Two American Girls in Paris
October 1916-*January* 1918

BY ESTHER SAYLES ROOT
AND MARJORIE CROCKER

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BOSTON & NEW YORK
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FOREWORD

THE authors of these letters are two young American girls, one from New York and the other from Boston.

They first met in Paris, each having volunteered her services to the Rev. and Mrs. Ernest W. Shurtleff, to aid in relief work among the refugees, or, as Dr. Shurtleff expressed it, "To help in our effort to get under part of the burden of humanity."

The letters were written (as is evident) for the family eye only, and consent to their publication has been given by cable with much hesitation.

To me they are revealing of the spirit of feminine young America — a brave and self-sacrificing spirit which shines out through irrepressible youthful humor and vivacity, and is a worthy complement to the unquestioning and unquestioned valor shown by the brothers of such girls to-day.

CLARA LOUISE BURNHAM.

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I

FROM ESTHER

Aboard Espagne, October 21, 1916.

Dear Father: —

The writing-room is a bower of gold leaf, electric-light fixtures, and Louis XIV brocade, but it is injudiciously placed where both the motion and vibration are greatest, and not even the marvelously developed yellow cherub, who holds a candelabrum over my shoulder, is inviting enough to induce me to stay here long. Not that I have n't plenty to tell. I could easily use up all the ship's paper in describing the various people and events of this memorable week.

The day we sailed was perfectly gorgeous. You remember. Mrs. Bigelow and I watched the big buildings and the Statue of Liberty slowly melt into the sunset, and then we went down to see what surprises the stateroom might reveal. And they were plenty. Letters upon letters and lovely presents. The atmosphere was a trifle charged as we passed the three-mile limit, and we all found billets — not so doux as they might have been — on our pillows assign-

ing us to lifeboats and saying just what to do when the signal should be given to abandon the boat. Both Mrs. Bigelow and Miss Short were assigned to Lifeboat No. 10, while I was shunted off in Lifeboat No. 8 — a bad omen, I thought. We went up on the top deck and looked them over. No. 8 looks like a peanut shell — and then we looked over the edge where the great big blue rollers were beginning to make the boat creak, and decided rather hurriedly to go down to dinner. You can imagine yourself what it would be like to start off on the sea in a canoe at our island when there was a good dash at the rocks.

Now here is where the Shrinking Violet steps in. Miss Short lost her traveling-bag, and was in misery. She can't speak or understand one word of French — and she appealed to me. I suppose you would have had me back coyly into the stern of the boat, and say that I did n't know the word for suitcase and did n't dare speak to the steward. But not so. I went up to a tremendous great gold-braided Frenchman and linked together the words "bagage," "noir," and "perdu," by a series of what I considered intelligent sounds, and, by Jove, the man — being a genius anyway — got the idea that some one had lost a black suitcase, and had the whole ship's service in action before I could wink.

Soon the suitcase appeared, and I had Miss Short's undying gratitude, coupled with complete dependence for the rest of the trip.

This was the beginning of Miracle Number One — that is, my French was perfectly understood, and I understood nearly everything. Oh, the joy of having the many hours spent over Chardenal at Hawthorne School under the vigilant eye of Miss Bourlard or Mlle. Delpit at college — of having them not spent in vain! Why, one of the Ambulance men told me yesterday that when he first saw me he thought I was French! (Of course, he speaks execrably himself, and my red tam might assume any nationality.) I order meals, carry on all our traffic with the stewardess and deck steward, and interpret right and left.

All during dinner you could see that people were rather waiting for a shot off our bows, and every one's expression was bien pressé. After dinner I took myself up on the bridge in my fur coat and stood alone watching the most beautiful moon-path that ever I saw. It was cold and clear with a fine breeze. "O Sole Mio" floated up gently from the steerage below. Helpful thoughts came to me, and suddenly Miracle Number Two happened. I felt perfectly sure that we were all right and that nothing was

going to happen to the Espagne. I have n't thought of Germans or submarines or anything since. I slept like a top that night.

Just as I was about to get into my berth, Mrs. Bigelow asked me if I knew where the life-preservers were. I had n't thought of them. Well, I was n't dressed, and I could n't go and ask the steward, so I said, "Go and find the steward, and say, 'Où sont les gilets de sauvetage?'" "I suppose," said Mrs. Bigelow, "that 'gilets' means 'preservers'?" "Well, not exactly," said I; "'gilets' means waistcoats, and 'sauvetage' means salvation; literally, the waistcoats of salvation; quaint, is n't it?" "Oh, very," said she; "Oo song lays geelays dee softadge — I can say that easily." "Alors, allez-vous en," said I, and bowed her out of the stateroom. She marched erectly down the corridor, and I could hear her voice, — firm, but growing fainter and fainter, — "Where are the waistcoats of salvation — oo song lays geelays dee softadge — where are the waistcoats," etc., — for all the world like "Fling out the Banner," or something of the kind. It would make a good hymn, I thought.

Back she came with a mute and suffering steward. He had understood her and pointed to the top of the wardrobe. He was not at all dis-

turbed by my nightgown, and I gave mental thanks to May for having run the ribbons in — I feel freer in the French tongue when I am in négligé. So the evening ended with a pleasant chat about sauvetage and naufrage and the amenities of life.

The first morning was blue and clear, but oh! so rough. My head began to feel funny as I dressed, so I hurried into my sailor blouse and red tam and beat it for the deck. And here we have Miracle Number Three. I was n't a bit sick for one minute, and have felt better and fuller of pep than I have since I was at Bailey's. I have been an obnoxious sight to most of the passengers because I have run, skipped, and jumped (figuratively) while they have rolled listless eyes at me. There were only about fifteen people in the dining-room that first luncheon, and I was the only woman. You should see this boat roll. Really, the Olympic or the Minneapolis would blush at such actions.

I hardly saw Mrs. Bigelow and Miss Short the first two days, and so it was natural that I should get very chummy with the Frenchman whose chair was next to mine. He has long wiry mustaches that stick out at least five inches on each side. He is a widower, and very small. He speaks French the most beautifully I ever heard,

and says lovely things, and makes jokes too. When he says anything funny he lifts his feet aloft and twinkles them very fast and goes into perfect spasms. He talks so fast that often I don't understand him, but I laugh just the same, and the more he laughs the more I do, because it strikes me so funny to be making such a hullabaloo when I have n't the faintest idea what it's about. He went up with me on the bridge for the moonlight the second night (Mrs. Bigelow and Miss Short were laid out in a tableau barely vivant), and we talked French and a little German — he recited Schiller — and I told him I was going to France, and he said, "Belle a de bon cœur," and we were bien amusés. He is French Consul at Montreal, and is going to see his two little sons at ——.

The next day the captain asked to "be presented to" me. He invited me to sit at his table, and oh, how I hated to refuse. All the interesting French people sit there, and Mrs. Craigee — that lovely-looking girl that we saw on the dock — and I could have practiced French so wonderfully. Besides, Mrs. Bigelow and Miss Short nearly always eat on deck, — but of course I had to sit with them. I was very much flattered, however, although I need n't have been, for there are so few girls on board.

There are thirty-six American Ambulance men, and some of them are dandies. About four in particular are most congenial, and we do everything together — shuffle-board, deck-walking, afternoon-teaing, card-playing, playing the piano, and generally exploring about the ship. I should like to describe every one, but I feel that this is getting boring as it is. The foreigners are delightful. Our French newspaper man took my picture for his paper the other day. He is exactly like a musical-comedy Frenchman — he raises his shoulders and says "la, la," and wears checked trousers and patent leathers and gets so very excited — such gestures!

At luncheon the other day there was great excitement — a wireless for some one, and it was for me! From Robert and Harris and Johnny. Really, I was so pleased. We were nine hundred miles out, and it seemed almost like seeing them to have it come. I walked on air all afternoon. At dinner that night the steward came around again, saying, "Télégramme sans fil pour Mlle. Root," — and there was a plate of salted almonds with the cards the Ambulance men had stuck in it, with all sorts of crazy messages written on them. I wirelessed back a poem as soon as I could gather my senses sufficiently, and a good time was had by all.

It is now Sunday and our last day. It is a glorious blue morning.

There is a good deal of talk of submarines and floating mines as we approach France. The life-boats were swung out last night, our guns loaded, all the lights darkened, and everything was preparedness. We tried on the life-preservers before retiring, and the dust of ages that they bore made me sneeze frightfully. How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to sleep on one's passport! I have played the piano a good deal on the trip. The whole ship is singing "Liebes Freud." This morning Mrs. Bigelow and I rose at 5.30, and saw a wonderful sunrise. We stood on the bridge together, and it was all gold and rose and purple. She is a peach, — Mrs. Bigelow. I can't wait to land, although I love the ship. I had thought of crossing as just crossing; and not as such a wonderful time. I do appreciate it all so much, Father, and I will write very seriously when I get to Paris.

Much love.

ESTHER.

II

FROM ESTHER

Paris, Monday, October 23, 3 A.M.

DEAREST MOTHER: —

This day has been so eventful, so utterly new and remarkable to me, that I can't bear to think of its being crowded out of my mind by the immediate to-morrows. These experiences in fact have been so remarkable and the after-dinner coffee so absolutely noir, that after a few hours of fitful slumber I seem to be done for the night. After I have described this place you will not wonder that ink is not provided, but you will forgive pencil, I hope (it's the nice black one out of Father's writing-case which I love so, and its maiden trip), although I know that writing in pencil holds a place with you alongside of messing the top bureau drawer and neglecting to wear a fully equipped sewing-bag always about the neck.

The last night on the steamer was thrilling. I stood way out on the bow with one of the Ambulance men (the nicest one) and watched the lights way off on the horizon grow brighter and

brighter. We watched the pilot row out from the pilot ship in a little boat, and although the sea looked perfectly calm compared to what it had been, it was like climbing mountains in a hickory shell. All dark night everywhere with a few flickering lights and men calling hoarse things in French back and forth from the ships — can't you see how weird it was?

It was too bad to go down the Gironde at night because they say it is a grand sight, but we were glad enough to wake up in Bordeaux. We got up at 5.30 and looked out on the wide flat river, the many boats, and the picturesque water's edge of the harbor. We packed our last things, had a farewell tour de force with the femme de chambre, flew around saying good-bye to everybody, and then stood in line to see the préfet de police. Right here I want to say that of all the fairy tales that were told me, the ones about the difficulties of getting to Paris were the most fantastic. There were a good many tiresome details: I had to show our passports everywhere, but everything went smoothly, and every one was most polite. I wish I could tell you the thousand and one funny things that happened in leaving the boat. How we hated to leave that darling stateroom and the still darlinger Espagne. You know my penchant for everything

Spanish, and I knew when I first heard that name at Bailey's that it was the boat for me; and it was.

You remember the confusion and perfect riotousness of landing. I managed my own things, which in itself is no joke. I had to get my stuff together, have it examined, weighed, and checked, send my cable, and telegraph Miss Curtis, pay my excess, and buy my railroad ticket, find a carriage, and leave that dock. It sounds simple, but with a million people all hurrying to do it at once and nothing but rapid-fire French going on, — I got a few short circuits that were disastrous, — it was dreadful (but often very funny) and took nearly two hours.

The customs inspector was a woman and pleasant as anything. I never even unlocked my trunk and she just poked at my suitcases.

How can I describe Bordeaux as we saw it through that musty cab window? Low and little and picturesque. It was like stepping into a stereopticon picture and finding it alive. Little houses and shops, with bright signs all in French, and foreign-looking people in the streets, and many soldiers and many, many widows. Queer-painted carts and little houses and little narrow alleys with uneven houses, dark and aged, huddled together with lights over the doors — you

know what I mean — adorable. The town itself is quite a place — good hotels and shops and cafés, with blue and red and yellow wicker chairs and tables on the sidewalk.

We piled our luggage in the lobby of the hotel and then filed into a dismal parlor and faced one another over a marble table (for ornament only). I was ready for bed and it was quarter of ten. The train for Paris left at one — three hours to wait and we so tired we could n't budge. How that parlor rocked and reeled after the steamer! Mrs. Bigelow said, "This is France." It made me think of "As You Like It" where Rosalind and Celia and Touchstone arrive in the forest.

After I had slept a little, sitting bolt upright in the lobby, we walked about town. The little back streets were so tiny that only one could walk on the sidewalk at a time. Even Boston can go one better than that. I walked in the middle of the street and never felt bigger in my life. Miss Short sent a cable, and I went by myself into a little shop and bought a copy of the "Marseillaise" — my first venture in commerce, and I was mighty embarrassed because I don't believe there is such a word as "copie" anyway, but I got it and was pleased to death to have actually achété-ed something.

It did n't seem long until train-time, and we

got into crowded but comfortable first-class carriages. After our elaborate good-byes, we found nearly every one from the steamer on the train, the Ambulance men and everybody. In our compartment there were a very fat French woman, a young girl, and her maid. The young girl — I had planned to spend hours in describing her, but I can't stop now. I'll just say she was Elsie Ferguson in "The Strange Woman," and let you picture her. The prettiest, most charming, and *warmest* creature I ever met. It was the first time I had heard a girl speak high French. There were no French women on the boat, you remember, and it was like music. The country we passed was the prettiest I've ever seen, more perfect than England even. So many poplars, and hills, — and such houses. There were acres of vineyards and lovely farms and with autumn foliage, — fainter than ours, of course, — lovely yellows and reds, and leaves dropping, and blue mists and more poplars, it was like a dream-land.

It was a long trip, but the steamer people visited back and forth and bought things at the stations and stood in the corridors and talked, and it did n't seem long. The fat French woman joined our conversation after the French girl got out at Poitiers — I must tell you that she is

married and her husband is an officer and has just recovered from being badly wounded. She is going to find out on Sunday if he has to go back, because, you see, he'll never be strong again, and she is praying that he'll be réformé for good. Oh, she does seem to love him so. If he is n't réformé he'll have to go back to the front. She is so brave and so beautiful!

Well, after she got out, a nice old Frenchman got in and a typical Englishman (who spoke French) and we had the most wonderful time. Of course we did n't speak at first, but the fat woman and I would say things across the compartment to one another and they would offer a remark now and then, until we all got to talking. I shall have to write some of these things down, I fancy. I'd hate to forget them. I thanked Heaven for the 'steenth time for my French, which is a bruised reed, right enough, but a perfect joy just the same.

I was expecting to fall into Miss Curtis's arms, but it would have been an empty fall, for she was n't there. I did n't know, when I wired her, that there were two stations, so I suppose she did n't know which to choose. I could have gone with Mrs. Bigelow and the others, but I thought Miss Curtis would have engaged a room for me here, so I wanted to try this place, anyway. One

of the Ambulance men, Mr. Baxter, offered to bring me here and see me installed. There were no taxis left, and it was still drizzling, and you know my luggage, — the eleventh hour Altman winter flannels boiling out of the carryall with price-marks dangling and soiled from constant exposure, — and me tired and dirty with the ship still going round in my head, standing alone by a dark and empty cabstand at 10.30 P.M. in Paris, the unknown. The others all rattled off, and Mr. Baxter disappeared to find a taxi, and I sidled up behind a big French soldier for comfort. I saw the fat French woman to say goodbye and thanked her for being so bien gentille to me. I told her that "elle m'avait fait senter la bien venue en France," which was rotten French, and she said, "Mais Mlle. est si aimable." I could have hugged her, and I felt as though she were a great big mother, twice, three times, your size, Mother.

Mr. Baxter manufactured a taxi out of nothing and we bundled in the bag and baggage without any idea how far our place was from the Quai d'Orsai. It was nice to be on terra-cotta — to be in a place where you don't have to show your birth certificate before you can order an egg, as he said. The only thing that any one has told me that's true is that Paris is dark. I don't

see how the taxi-men can drive at all. We rattled along, and finally came to a street that looked like a tunnel — a faint light at the other end — that's all. At the very blackest point we stopped, the driver said, "C'est l'hôtel," and by the light of a match we could see a black sign with gold letters beside a door that looked like the door of a stable, saying that, indeed, it was Hôtel des St. Pères — but oh, so dark. It looked as though Louis Treize's sub-valet de chambre had boarded it up and gone away and that no one had ever been there since. We knocked and knocked, and after ages we heard a shuffling step and the great black doors swung open. There stood the sleepiest, wall-eyed person, almost entirely covered by a big spotted butcher's apron. I asked in uncertain tones if they had place for Miss Root, and he shook his head and I asked if he knew Miss Curtis, and he said no, and then I asked if I could get a room. It was the most awful-looking place. I did n't know just what to do. He made for a dark flight of stairs, — the janitor, I mean, — and I started to follow him. I asked Mr. Baxter if he supposed the janitor was a concierge, and he told me that jardinière was the nearest he could get to it. Upstairs we went on dark-red carpet, past maroon walls — up and up and up. Very high ceilings

and long black corridors. Finally he opened a room on the fourth floor, and it looked clean, and I said I'd stay. I went down to get my things and to thank Mr. Baxter for being so kind. I should have been so forlorn all alone. So he drove off to the Ambulance Headquarters. I could hear the taxi going off down the street and the "jardinière" tumbling over my bags. I do think American men are wonderful!

We climbed again to this eyrie and he wished me "bon soir." Again I was so glad for French because, as he was turning down my bed, — I told him that "je viens de venir d'Amérique," and that I did not wish "que l'on me réveille." He was quite genial and said good-night all over again.

My room is the queerest of the queer. There is a worn red carpet with rainbow figures, the paper is green and yellow striped — mild, but incontestably green and yellow. The ceiling is slanted and I have one dormer window. There is a marble mantelpiece and a huge bed; also a marble washstand, which I feel must be a bit of ornamentation looted from Napoleon's tomb. I looked out of the window, but it's perfectly black. There may be a blank wall six inches away, or a court or a forest of trees or almost anything for all I can see. I stood in the middle

of the room with my hands on my hips and looked around and smiled. There was my own fur coat which is Northampton to me, and my black sweater which is Bailey's, and my suitcases and myself — all of us dropped into this garret room.

When I went to lay my weary — oh, so weary — bones between the sheets, I found the latter to be fashioned apparently out of heavy canvas. It was like nestling down between two jibs of the good swordfisher, "Edmund Black." The pillow is enormous and uncompromising — my own little baby pillow Mrs. Bigelow put in her trunk for me. Still, as I describe them, they look very good to me and I think I'll go back to them. It is getting light, I think, and pouring rain, I'll try looking out again.

Tuesday.

I have seen it! I have seen it! Paris is the most romantic place in the world. Talk about London! Oh, I never shall forget this afternoon. I went to sleep almost before I stopped writing the above in pencil and never woke up until twelve o'clock. I asked the femme de chambre whether or not any one had called for me, thinking Miss Curtis might have tried to find me, and she said that I had had two telephone calls, and that a young gentleman had been here in a taxi.

It was Mr. Baxter, of course, because he said he would take me back to the Quai d'Orsay and help me with my trunk and customs and prefect of police; and there, they'd told him that I was asleep, and not to be waked up! I felt hopeless at the thought of having to go by myself without any idea of what to do! I suppose Mrs. Bigelow may have called me up. I had no idea of Miss Curtis's whereabouts and I knew that the Shurtleffs are at their headquarters all day long and I had no idea where that was, and I knew that Mrs. Bigelow was at the other end of Paris and could n't help me even if I did see her.

I did n't feel like lunch, so I took the map of Paris and went out in the dripping streets with no umbrella. I was so confused and so embarrassed with my map, which I did n't dare open; I felt that people were staring at me, and my rubbers and umbrella were in my trunk and my coat and hat and feet were soaking. I just wandered along and finally came to a taxi. I decided to go to Mrs. Shurtleff's house, whether she was in or not. So I said, 6 Place Denfert-Rochereau, and got out at a big apartment house. I walked in, and there was no elevator boy or telephone girl or anything, so I rang at the first apartment and asked for Dr. Shurtleff. The maid said he was n't there, and I asked if she could tell what

apartment he lived in and she said she did n't know; finally her face lighted up and she showed me into a little parlor and said, "You come for a consultation! I'll go and get the doctor." Heavens and earth, I'd stumbled into a physician's office. I said, "No, no!" and went out. I thought I'd have to ring at all the apartments to find the Shurtleffs, but I found a concierge, tremendously en négligé, who pointed to a little elevator and said, "third floor." I got in expecting to be followed, but bang went the doors without apparently word or sign from any one and up I shot. Up and up; and I was scared to death. I felt sure I was going through the roof; but eventually we stopped and I got out and rang at the first bell to the left, as I'd been told. No answer; I rang and rang; still no answer. I gathered that they were at the headquarters, so I sat down on the top step of the stair and wrote on the back of my visiting card that I was at the Hôtel des St. Pères. I was a little discouraged, because it meant that I would have to wait at the hotel until some one could call or write. In the mean time the lift was standing inert and I could n't make it go down — of course, I would n't have gone down in it myself for the gross receipts. I could hear people ringing wildly down below and pretty soon a man came leaping up the stairs. I

No. 6 Place Denfert-Rochereau

asked in my prettiest French if he could make the thing go down, and he could n't any more than I. He started to go into an opposite apartment, and as the door opened I heard some one greet him in English. I jumped up; it was the first English I'd heard since the others had left me. I rushed forward and almost put my foot in the door, for I was desperate. I asked the woman who had spoken, one of the most beautiful women I ever saw, if she knew where Dr. Shurtleff lived. She said, "I am Mrs. Shurtleff. Why, you must be Miss Root." And she threw both her arms around me and pulled me into their living-room. There were Miss Curtis and Dr. Shurtleff and a blazing wood-fire. If that was n't heaven on earth to me, I should be ungrateful to admit it. We talked and talked, and oh, but I was glad to see them! They never had received my telegram and the Espagne had not been announced in Paris, the concierge had directed me to the wrong apartment, but now everything was straightened out. It just happened that they were taking an afternoon off, the Shurtleffs, that is; the others left very soon. I had n't had anything to eat since on the train the night before, and I felt weak and horrid, and everything still rocked; so Mrs. Shurtleff gave me hot tea and nut bread and cold chicken, and

warmed me through and through. She is an angel; she looks like one of the old Gibson drawings, — beautiful, and so charming and enthusiastic, and much younger, too, than I had thought, with light-brown hair and blue eyes and pink cheeks.

The first thing to decide was where I should live permanently, and Mrs. Shurtleff took me that afternoon to two pensions, the best and nearest to the work. One was very near, just across a little green square from the Shurtleffs'. The other was on an adorable little street in the old Latin Quarter, where all the painters from time immemorial have lived. It was dark, and no conveniences, no heat, no running water, and no bathtub in the whole house. But I peeped into one of the rooms and there was a wood-fire singing so adorably, and a lovely mantelpiece and gold mirror, and a piano with candles. That was nine francs a day, and although much more inconvenient and far-away, I wanted to go there. The cook showed us around and I promised to call on Wednesday and see the landlady.

After that Mrs. Shurtleff took me to do an errand — and I saw Paris for the first time. I think that the Seine, and the bridges, and lines of straight trees are the most beautiful things I've ever seen. We looked up the Champs Ély-

sées as the sun was setting and the lights were beginning to twinkle through a violet haze. It was like a dream city. I sat on the extremest edge of the seat in the taxi gazing and gazing at everything. Mrs. Shurtleff delighted in my delight, and she said it made her live again the enthusiasm and wonder that she felt when she came here ten years ago. So many queer things I noticed that she grew used to years ago; the door-handles in the middle of the doors, the lamp-posts in the middle of the sidewalks, and funny quaint little things like that. We saw a trolley-car marked "Bastille," and I burst out laughing. Why, it seemed like marking the ugliest, most ordinary or modern thing "Guillotine" or "Robespierre"! Think of getting a transfer or "watching your step" going to the Bastille.

I went to the Vestiaire yesterday morning where I am to work. It is wonderfully interesting. All kinds of clothing are piled everywhere and there is an office where people apply, and everything is very business-like. The refugees are pathetic to the last degree, and already I have seen many, many people, and heard of cases, that I could n't believe existed in the world. I have n't done any real work yet; but here is something I want to tell you. We need

everything, particularly warm things, blankets; and big wide shoes above everything. I saw men turn away some people to-day, and I tell you I'd like to snatch these bedclothes out of the hotel and go find old people and give them to them. But any kind of clothes! I saw a pile of sticks, about a hundred, stored in the corner, and I asked Mrs. Shurtleff what they were for and she said for the blind. They can't afford to buy them. Think of being blinded and then not being able to afford a few pennies to buy a cane.

I find that Paris is much more alive and happy than I had expected, although the individual cases are so very hard.

I have decided on my pension, and I like Mme. H——. My room certainly is comfort itself, for Paris, with lovely sunlight and trees and a park below. I move in November 4th, and I am glad to have it settled. Living is so expensive that many of the best pensions have had to close, so I feel I am wonderfully lucky.

Yesterday afternoon I covered about twelve acres of streets and buildings in fulfilling various official formalities, and now call all the prefects of police by their first names. I had no trouble, but it is tedious to go from one place to another. My official title on the Paris register is now "Demoiselle de Vestiaire," and as that can refer both

Women's Vestiaire

Men's Vestiaire

to relief work and to check girls in restaurants, I can give up one any time for the other.

I went to the station and brought my trunk here. I had dinner with Mrs. Bigelow, and we just fell on each other's necks and could n't seem to let go. Those two days of separation have been pretty long. We went to church to the Wednesday evening meeting. We could hear them singing "Abide with Me" as we came up the street, and it was the first note of music that I had heard in many a long day, except what I played myself on the steamer. My heart just swelled up, and when we got in and sang the third verse, the tears were rolling down our cheeks. It was a wonderful service.

The sun shines to-day for the first time, and I have been out with my trusty map. You see such vital little scenes in the street — two girls poring over a letter from the front, and giggling and teasing each other; a little girl with tight black pig-tails, bare legs and socks, a full black cape, and a basket under her arm, standing on tippey-toes to ring an old bronze bell; a widow walking along with a little child, watching with an inscrutable expression a car full of soldiers starting for the front; a group of poor people, market-women, old men, and children, pressing closely around a sign-poster who is posting up a

list, "Morts pour la Patrie." Many times you see the signs: "Don't talk, be careful, enemy ears are listening." Oh, this country is at war, but I can't tell you the inspiration that seems to be in the very streets. And it is so beautiful when I think that I am really to live here, to be chez moi, and have my own books and pictures and perhaps some plants, and be able to go about and see these things. I can't tell you how happy I am. If the Statue of Liberty ever wants to see me again, she will have to turn a complete back somersault.

I send love home in bushels. There have been *moments* in these last few days! But never for one breath have I wished that I had n't set out, and now with my pension settled, my permis de séjour granted by the police, my trunk by my side, my work fairly started, the Shurtleffs perfectly wonderful, and Mrs. Bigelow at hand and happy, why, nothing could be happier than I am. And I never can thank you enough for letting me come. My one trouble now is writer's cramp, so I must stop before I am too paralyzed to address the envelope!

Do write me.

Love to you all.

ESTHER.

III

FROM ESTHER

Paris, November 26, 1916.

Dearest Mother: —

My literary style may be a trifle affected by Baedeker, but I hope the following details will not seem as dry as sawdust to you, for they are the very air I breathe daily.

At the beginning of the war the French Government declared a moratorium, which is the suspension of rent payments for every one in Paris paying a rent of less than two thousand francs or possibly three thousand francs. With practically all the men mobilized, many families would have starved but for this provision. The wives or widows of soldiers are given a regular income by the French Government called "allocation," — one franc twenty-five centimes a day and seventy-five centimes for each child. The soldiers themselves get five sous a day (formerly three sous), which barely enables them to get necessities and soap and tobacco, etc.

"Chaumage" is money given to woman refu-

gees if they have no men fighting. One franc twenty-five centimes a day for all over sixteen not working (mothers of little children, invalids, blind, etc.), and fifty centimes for children. There is a special old-age pension for men and women over sixty. In addition to these pensions there are committees — Comité Franco-Belge, Comité de la Marne, Secours des Meusiens, etc., who help refugees by giving money and clothes to special cases. They are so swamped with demands, however, that they cannot do much. It is a marvel to me what they and the French Government can do and what complication of financial adjustment is apparently carried on successfully. Where *does* the money come from to finance this war?

Perhaps it would seem that considering the chaumage, the refugees are nearly as well off as the Parisians, but I assure you it is not so: the moratorium makes a vast difference, and, above all, the strangeness of Paris, ignorance of where to find places to live and work, ill health often contracted from the hardships of the way down and the frightful shock of living through bombardment. Many of them, you see, were fairly well off in Rheims or Lille or Maubeuge, or wherever they came from, and had to flee with only the clothes they had on their backs. The

people who try to do much with little and live up to their former way of living appeal to my sympathy more than the most squalid who really have the greatest misery.

We have found that people can get a furnished room for thirty centimes a day and up. Awful little rooms, dens of darkness and disease, can be found (only occasionally, praise be) for three francs a week; but I can't consider those. I saw one yesterday — a mother and two little girls live there, and it was about the size of the cabin in our motor-boat, but made the latter seem vast and airy by comparison. With the prices of food and coal high, and constantly soaring, the poor people can just make out their rent and food, but cannot buy clothes. Shoes are thirty francs and up. You can figure it out for yourself. With our help, however, many, many poor families can get along that would otherwise be destitute. Sometimes we can give a girl a suit which will enable her to present herself for a far better position than she could hope to obtain in rags. Sometimes boys can go to school if they have warm new shoes, a black apron, and an overcoat, when without them they would stay at home and shiver in idleness. Warm strong clothing not only gives a new lease to health, but to life as a whole. You should see the little girls when I

give them a hair-ribbon or a dress for their doll, if they have one.

I have gathered a lot of old stuff that I found at the Vestiaire and have brought it home and ironed it out and cut it up fresh and given it away to all sorts of little "fillettes." I do believe in the trimmings even for the most wretched, especially if they're kids, and I am glad to say that Mrs. Shurtleff does, too. We have a box of tinsel favors filled with tiny bonbons that we give to the littlest, if they are restless while their parents are being accommodated. The other day we had a little angel of less than two, a small refugee from Rheims with its father and mother. Her ears were pierced and supported tiny earrings. When in this war-time any one had the time and inclination to pierce that child's ears is one on me! Her father left our part of the Vestiaire a few minutes to be fitted to an overcoat in the men's department, and the child began to howl. I took it in my arms and rushed it after its father as fast as I could go. Then all was serene again. In some cases we go so far as to move families from crowded, dirty, unsavory quarters to as clean and as airy a place as we can find in proportion to their income. We then guarantee their rent for three months and help them to furnish. This is all in the hands of the

installation department, and I have nothing to do with that, so I cannot tell you as much as I would like to.

The field work is the visiting and investigation of applicants. The war work of the Students Atelier Reunions has become known by word of mouth among the refugees. Of course, the reports and results of our work travel like wildfire and we are inundated with requests. After receiving a letter from a refugee the case is looked up by two field workers and reported at a meeting of the committee the following Saturday morning. A vote is taken as to what to do and how much to give if it is decided to give anything. The people are then told to present themselves at the Vestiaire and we give them what they need. Every type of man, woman, and child has crossed our threshold even within my month of service. How I love them all!

I try to get each story as I measure the person and search the stock and try on and tie up and list. Mother would die to see me, who have never known anything more about children than that they belonged to the animal kingdom and were awful little monkeys and might better approach more nearly the vegetable kingdom, even if they were darlings — to see me tell some mother of ten that "her little Yvonne is large

for eight," or that "Renaud has small feet for a boy of twelve." It is I who measure and mark children's clothes as they are sent to us, according to age, and in centimeters at that. I have been driven to ascertaining my own waist measure by the same rating and now go about heavily veiled.

My good fortune has been to be made one of the field workers and I go with either Miss Curtis or Miss Sturgis every Monday and Wednesday. Two always go together because, until we have been to a place once, we don't know what we are getting into, and it would be foolish to go alone way to the back of the top of these big dark buildings without knowing what sort of people lived there. In their homes you do see the people chez eux. We see the extremes of cleanliness and filth, thrift and abjectness. I shall not stop to describe individual homes now, but I can tell you some of them are rare. In one home of about the same stratum as the Russian family Mother and I visited last Christmas, I stepped gingerly among the rags, coal-dust, food, and so forth on the floor, and went and sat beside the dirtiest but the darlingest child you ever saw, — blue eyes with black lashes, which always get me, you know, — but its nose running fearfully. Miss Curtis did the questioning, but I in-

terrupted every three minutes to beseech the mother to wipe the offending organ. I finally learned that the child ought to have an operation, but it is only twenty-five months old and the doctor will not operate until she is three. I showed her the buttons on my glove, fastening and unfastening them. She looked up to me with her dirty little mouth smiling radiantly and said, "Tiens!"

They are not the type we can do much for, but I begged some warm clothes for them and they came to the Vestiaire yesterday. The name is Pruvot, and there are a mother and daughter, three sons in the war, one of whom I am going to adopt as "filleul," a son and his wife and two little girls, and a little illegitimate child of a son who has disappeared and whose mother has abandoned it. He is the star child, Marcel Pruvot, two and a half years, and I am crazy to adopt him. What would you say if I brought him home with me? Think of what one could make of his life; but, of course, I shall not. We sent a layette to one little mother. (My mother should see the layette department, stocked up with the cutest things I ever saw.) And as a special luxury, we included some talcum powder, marked "poudre de riz" (rice powder). Mrs. Jackson went to look her up one day and found

her boiling the talcum powder with water in a saucepan, just about to feed it to the little creature of three months. She had never heard of powder before.

The next big branch of work is fitting out the blind. There is more pathos, gayety, and inspiration on Tuesday and Friday afternoons than in all the rest of the week. After the men are wounded at the front they are brought back through a chain of relief stations, "postes de secours," to hospitals, and finally to a Paris hospital. The blind are allowed to recuperate here either at the Val de Grace or the Quinze-Vingt (big hospitals), and are then sent away, usually to the country to learn a trade or to rejoin their families, or both. They must give up their military clothes, underclothes, and shoes when they are discharged, and are given only the poorest kind of civilian clothes in exchange. This is where we step in to give them decent clothes. In many cases they are not given civilian clothes at all, although I don't understand the Government system enough to see how that is possible. So Miss Hodges, our representative in work for the blind, brings five or six of the most needy and touching cases to us and we fit them out.

The blind are the most childlike as a general

rule of all the people we deal with, and the outfit we give them and the kindness and help they receive at the Vestiaire mean to them a new start in life, as we have learned from guards afterwards. Such brave fellows! It is an exception to see one downcast or morose, but when you do, your heart aches twice as much, not only for them, but for the many gay ones who have conquered despair. One boy twenty-four years old was wounded in the leg and dragged himself along the ground half conscious, to find he was dragging himself toward the German trenches. At this point he was struck again and his eyes put out. He lay between the trenches under fire for days, unconscious most of the time and feigning death the rest. By a miracle he escaped being killed. He was picked up and taken to a hospital; has been there six months, and is now starting out to learn a trade — in the dark. I love to do what I can for them, especially as this is my one chance to know the French poilu.

You would laugh to see me measuring and fitting, especially when it comes to holding up underwear to some dear blind giant. I remember all too well how at the age of eight I used to wriggle in Altman's when mother insisted on "getting an idea how they would go" by holding

"them" up to me. Every saleswoman and floor-walker got the idea clearly. There are moments when blindness is not such a misfortune.

The blind soldiers are always interested to know what their new clothes look like. "C'est de quel couleur, Mademoiselle?" "Dark brown," I say, "and I will give you a brown and white tie." "Ah que je serai chic, moi!" One of his comrades would nudge him and say, "Je voudrais bien avoir les yeux pour te voir, maintenant, mon vieux! C'est vrai que tu vais te marier?" (I would like to have eyes to see you now, old fellow; is it true you are just going to be married?) Then they laugh and thank me "mille fois" and shake hands and wish me good luck. Sometimes I walk down the street with them and guide them along. I admire their medals and tell them that the passers-by are looking at them, etc. We never say the word "aveugle" (blind), but "blessé" (wounded). Sometimes when we have to wait for their guards I sit on the table and tell them all about my crossing and about America, and, oh, a hundred things. We do have good times — for the moment.

I have tried to give you a grasp of what we have to meet and how we try to meet it. First, the French system of pensions and rents, then the giving of clothes and the moving of families,

then the field work and the work for the blind. I have n't told about the Ouvroir because I am not well enough informed. We give employment to many women in making clothes for the Vestiaire, — flannel shirts and petticoats, underclothes, dresses, everything. All materials, clothes, furniture, or their equivalent in money, come from America.

Now for our needs. We need shoes (this "we" may be taken editorially, for when my present boots take wings I don't know what I shall do. I can't afford French shoes in war-times); large sizes, both men's and women's, and all sizes children's — women's 5, 6, and 7 lengths, C, D, and E widths, and men's correspondingly large. Then blankets, diaper material by the yard, men's overcoats (we had to turn away a blind boy the other day who had had his feet and legs frozen and was lame and was just beginning to get tuberculosis), and women's shirts and heavy union suits. These are great needs, but if there are any available just plain clothes, — dresses, suits, children's clothes, boy's trousers and sweaters, neckties, gloves, ribbons, stockings, caps, — send them. If Mother has any sewing-circle in New York or elsewhere at her command, I should like to use it as a part of the propaganda, if I may. I believe she suggested

it. If they want to make anything, make aprons for boys and girls from four to fourteen years, the larger sizes from ten to fourteen being the most important. All the school children wear them, and always black. The stuff is like lining sateen. It is astonishing to me that not only parents, but the children, are eager for anything black. It is more practical, of course, and as it is the custom for all the school children to wear black, any child feels embarrassed and odd to wear a color. Only hair-ribbons do they like bright, and this is because they dress up on Sundays to go to the cemeteries. The apron is an all-over apron with sleeves, and buttons up the back.

My idea is to give always what fits and what is right to each person on the spot. Give her something to take pride in and live up to. I have seen a nice-looking waist for a girl to wear to her work in a paper-bag factory not only transform her looks, but the expression of her face. I consider it as much my duty to tell people at home what we need as to go to work every morning. If you could know how we long for packing-boxes to come from America. Sometimes when they do come they are filled with junk. Old dirty clothes full of holes, pieces of lace, jet passementerie, etc., and how disap-

pointed we are! We are hoping, perhaps, for three dozen heavy union suits for men, and find some worn-out long white kid gloves.

Could n't you tell some of our dear friends about the Vestiaire? So often at home I have heard people say, "It is awful how little I do for the war. I would like to do more, but I don't know just what to do." Tell them that here's an opportunity not only to help France, but to back up Americans.

One kind of help that appeals to me strongly, though it is entirely outside of my work here, is adopting "filleuls." Many soldiers have wives and families who write to them and send packages and warm things, and an occasional bar of soap, cake of chocolate, or package of cigarettes. Then there are many poor fellows whose families are in the invaded provinces or killed. They have no one, no encouragement, no one to write to or get letters from or give them trifling remembrances. These are adopted as "filleuls" (godsons) by "marraines" (godmothers), who take an interest and try and fill the place of family to them. Hundreds have been so adopted in America, as you know, but there are so many more who are quite forlorn. I heard of one boy the other day who was the only one in his regiment who never got anything, but tried to go

away by himself when he knew it was time for the mail to come. I adopted him like a shot. I have since taken three more temporarily, as I can't possibly afford to keep them unless I can get some one in America to support them. Now, many of my friends cannot write French very readily and don't want to be bothered, and it takes months, anyway, for packages to get from New York to the French front, so I thought that if I could get two or three people to support my boys, I would do the writing and the sending of packages gladly, and then report to whoever was supporting them at home and forward to the supporters the men's letters.

You spend anywhere from three dollars up for the package and send the package once a month. I shall keep these men from now until I hear from you and make an account of what I spend for them. Please be sure and let me know.

One of our greatest needs is a small motor-car — we take great heavy packages and heavy furniture all over town, and then in the visiting work we have to go everywhere, and we get really more tired than I ever thought it possible to get and we waste so much time walking. There are many places where the trams and subways don't go and the auto-buses have stopped run-

ning. Here they are too expensive to buy and mostly too poor in quality. They ask thirty-two hundred francs for a 1910 Ford.

Affectionately,

ESTHER.

IV

FROM MARJORIE

S.S. Finland, Wednesday (December 19, 1916).

DEAR DADDY: —

At about noon yesterday, we were all thrilled to see a big transport ship go by us to starboard. She was very lightly laden, and tossed about at a great rate. She had no flag and no visible name, and gave us no signal, which my friend, the purser, tells me is the custom in war-time. She was too far off to wig-wag, and she did not wish to use the wireless and thereby let some one else know her whereabouts. We were all duly thrilled by her and watched her out of sight. Then we lay down again, only to be bounced out of our chairs by the news that a French man-of-war was passing us to port. We tooted around to the other side, and there she was, big French flag, a medium-sized ship and a cruising destroyer, according to the faithful purser. She went by us slowly and gave no sign. We were duly grateful, for I can tell you her guns looked awfully big! After she had gotten well past us, and we thought everything was over, she sud-

denly fired a gun, began to steam up like everything, and turned around remarkably quickly and came racing down on top of us, smoke pouring out of her funnels and coming full-tilt right at us. Nobody knew what it could mean, and then our engines stopped and we hove to. The officers all beat it up to the bridge, and you never saw so many sick passengers come to life and hang over the rail with the rest of us watching. Every one had a different notion, and I can tell you it was sort of scary, for she might be a German in disguise, and Heaven only knows what she might do. After she got alongside, she stopped and wig-wagged for all she was worth. After about ten minutes, which seemed at least an hour, our engines started, and we went our way. She circled around us, and kept going off in different directions, and then turning. It seemed as if she was looking for something. The report the captain gave out was that she wanted the Greenwich time; wanted to know where we were going, and then wished us "Bon voyage." You can believe that or not. It does not sound plausible to me, but, anyway, the dear thing left us after having scared the life out of us. When she was alongside, and you began to think of life in a lifeboat in this sea, which is fairly smooth, it did not appeal. I suppose it all sounds trivial to

you, — to be held up by a warship in mid-ocean, — but with the fact in mind that all sorts of things are happening now that never did before, and also that she went steaming past and then suddenly turned, we all had plenty of room for imagination. It was awfully interesting to see how different people took it. I think I would have been scared to death myself if it had not been for the humor of the idea of perishing with a certain one on my arm. She, poor soul, was so frightened and weak that she was both pitiful and laughable.

This dear boat seems to go more slowly every day. At the present rate, I don't think we will land much before Easter! She certainly is nice and steady, though, and if this glorious weather keeps up, I, personally, don't care at all when we get in. It is so warm that it is really ridiculous. Here we are at Christmas season, and yesterday I walked the deck all the morning without even a sweater, my flannel waists being heavy enough, though, to make up for something, I guess.

MARJE.

V

FROM ESTHER

December 16 *to* 31, 1916.

DEAREST SISTER: —

From subtle remarks let fall from Father's pen, I take it that my letters have all the charming privacy of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. The thought that my recountings are coldly fed to the jaws of a typewriter without so much as considering my editorial "oui" has caused me to give my writing-table as wide a berth as is compatible with the size of this my dominion; but since he at the same time calls me "fàtuous child" instead of using the far more obvious and shorter adjective, I say, So be it. The writing-table leads me on in spite of my better self, and I settle myself before this block of cheapest French paper with certain foreknowledge that I shall give birth — this time — to many indiscretions. (Why be called fatuous if you cannot live up to it?)

I have an idea of compiling a list of my various friends and associates in a series of descriptions,

something like La Bruyère's "Caractèrcs" — only far more interesting. I realize from your letters how stingy I have been in telling you about the pension and the people who have invited me about in Paris, and now that my first fear is dispelled, I shall proceed. My first fear, you see, was that the family would think I was having too good a time and would call me home with dispatch; now that good times manifest themselves in such rarity, I feel free to describe those first weeks of gayety. I shan't mention war or refugees this time, not because I don't every day live and breathe them (sometimes not so pleasant), but because I do. To-night is my night off — this letter is a soirée!

My room, my dominion, my home — how I love it! It is fairly large, but larger still is the bed, which is a dominion in itself. Alongside it I am an incident, and alongside of me the piano is an episode. The massive orange armoire, topped by my two suitcases and a hatbox, towers in vain when I look up at it in the early morning from my eider-down fastness — or (see Father) slowness. "My bed is like a little boat" no more than it is like Central Park — in fact, the darling Espagne would seem small beside it. To enter the room, to comb the hair, to wash the hands, to exit from the room, you must insinuate

yourself between the bed and the wall. I might say there's *no* getting around it.

I call the armoire Richard Cœur de Lion — it is strong and all-embracing. I have no bureau, but dress — instead of eat — "off" the mantelpiece. Everything is dumped into the armoire — ribbons, collars, dresses, shoes, books, chewing-gum, hats, furs, *et al.*, and believe me, they stand not on the order of their going! I will say, though, before Mother's last whitened tress is wound up on her finger and put away in a little Altman box at the back of her right-hand bureau drawer, that I keep things pretty well arranged on the different shelves and in the little drawers, my best clothes being left in my wardrobe trunk, but my orderliness (so-called) is due to no virtue of my own, but to the fact that I *never* wear anything but my blue serge dress, my old blue coat, heavy underwear, old tan boots and rubbers — never, except during giddy interregna of the old "battleship gray." Always put on in the morning what you took off the night before, is my *sine qua non* — which does n't make any sense, but you know what I mean.

For chairs, I have one armchair of imitation red leather, which is stiff and smooth and cold, but when I cover it over with my two sweaters to take the edge off, as it were, it does very well.

Then there are two little chairs made so that you sit on them diagonally, — I've always thought them an abomination, — but I never sit in them, just spread my clothes out on them at night. Then I have a small straight chair which goes with the little table that serves as desk.

My rugs — Heaven save the name! — are three irregular strips of carpet — one red (a little purpler than the chair) with navy-blue fleurs-de-lys (you will remember that the wall-paper is pink and gold); the other two, gray in background, with a design which would seem to be conventionalized lyre-birds and sculpins sparring in a whirlpool. It takes the two strips to show the pattern — perhaps it is the great-grandchild of a gobelin nightmare.

I have no place for my books. Indeed, I did n't have any books when I started out, except my dictionaries, but Mrs. Bigelow has left me ten Baedekers, and any number of books and magazines have been lent me. I stack them up on the piano, but it is *very* untidy.

I have a little "cabinet" with a wash-bowl and running water, and I have squeezed my trunk in, too. I don't mind being cramped, but it is *fierce* to invite any one in to take tea. Of course, if I had a divan or folding sofa instead of the Royal Couch, things would be simple. I

have thought it over, and have hesitated less on account of the expense of buying one than the forfeiture of my one real source of comfort. I had Mrs. Bigelow and Mrs. Shurtleff and Miss Curtis and Miss Sturgis in one day for tea, and I had to sit on the bed and practically entertain through the bars. Mrs. Shurtleff is very anxious for me to get a sofa, — it's just impossible, of course, to let any of the Ambulance men come to call here, — but I don't know. I may get a little hanging bookcase. Just try, yourself, living without a bureau, a desk, a bookcase, or a rug, and see how screaming it is. This last week, I spent most of the time I was in the house sitting on a little hassock with my back to the radiator. It has been bitter cold, and we had three centimeters of snow, and there is hardly *any* coal. Mme. H—— does n't turn on the electricity in the morning, and turns it off at 10.45 at night, and the heat goes off about 8.30, and we can't have fires in our rooms, and it is freezing. When I even mention these little inconveniences, I remind myself of the picture that came out in "Punch" about two years ago: a silly ass reading the newspaper and saying, "They've stopped the cinemas at Brighton, by Jove! That does bring the war home to one!" You should hear what my boys write to me about the cold in the trenches.

Now for the wonder in my ménage — I have a piano. One day I left the house determined to get a mouth-organ if nothing else, — I had whistled and sung quite enough, — and I was such a *pest* in other people's houses, when I discovered their pianos, that I decided to do something desperate. I found a little piano-store on rue Denfert-Rochereau, with a little upright, and a darling blind piano-maker and his worried little wife — everything little. When I found that the upright (with brass candle-brackets) would be mine to command for twelve francs a month, I said, "Have it charged and sent," in my best Lord & Taylor style.

Well, it came. It came the next morning when I was still in bed, and I had to crawl into my wardrobe trunk while it was being installed. When the heavy footsteps had echoed down the hall, I sprang forward like any Eurydice, in my dollar-ninety-eight robe de nuit. I played and played, and was a *little* late to the Vestiaire that morning. I had a long hard day that day, and almost forgot my new treasure until after dinner, when I sat down on the piano-stool. I was casting about for some music — any music — to play, when Mlle. Germain, a French girl here, came in and offered a copy of the Beethoven Symphonies. I struck up the Fifth, and, believe

me, it was like solid ground beneath my feet. Since then I have eaten up all five — it's only the first book that she has. We went to a concert given in a little room (I thought it was a bar when I first went in, — marble-topped tables and men smoking), but there was no symphony. I have n't had time to go to another lately.

In spite of remembering the Steinway at home, you can imagine how happy I am with my little piano, even if it does come up barely to my hip. It is usually out of tune, and is very painful, but the little blind man comes with his wife and tunes it, and I *could n't* send it back. I play with a bicycle face my whole repertoire; — but I tell you I'm gay, and I've learned to watch out at the end of the F major étude not to crack my elbow against the foot of the bed, for I find that my bed gives out a metallic sound when rapped sharply with a bone. I stick my umbrella into the brass handle at the side of the piano, and then I have a "piano à queue"! After a few hours of reading Beethoven, Mlle. Germain and I get out a piece of French gâteau from the armoire and cut off a couple of slices with my shoe-horn, and sit around in our pajamas and discuss music and education and politics — and our complexions. All too soon the lights go out on us, and she says, "Bon soir,

chère Mademoiselle," and goes off down the hall by the light of her last cigarette. Oh, we do have good times!

I must tell you about the maids, for they are no inconsiderable part of my days. There are two femmes de chambre, both small, and dark, and very young. I was reading in my room one night after I had been here about a week, when Mélanie came to turn down my bed. I, thinking to turn my French on any victim, started to ask her questions about where her home was, etc. She told me that she and Maria were both from the North — Pas-de-Calais — and that they had had to come to Paris to work after their husbands had been killed early in the war.

"Husbands!" I said. "Don't tell me you're married?"

"Mais si, Mademoiselle, — Maria has a little boy and I have a little girl, — they're both three years old. They live with their grandmothers back home. We can see them only once a year!"

I simply could n't believe it. Why, those two are perfect kids themselves — little and rosy-cheeked, scared to death of Mme. H——, but often giggling apart in corners.

No one giggles, I can tell you, when you mention the war, and it's only because they've been

blessed with sunny natures that they can ever seem light-hearted. Their children, being in the war zone, seem a thousand miles away from them, because, even if Mélanie and Maria could afford the trip oftener, they could n't get the military permit to go through more than once a year. They can't earn anything in the invaded district, and Heaven knows Paris is the worst place to move the whole family to, who are now fairly well off in the country. So here they are, Mélanie and Maria, working their legs off, doing all the chamber work, waiting on table and odd jobs for fourteen people — for the princely sum of six dollars a month and tips. Louise, the cook, is Mélanie's aunt, a jolly soul, and one fine cook. She lets me come into the kitchen any time, and gives me a hot apple fritter or some grilled carrots. I found it was customary to give ten francs for the three maids to divide among them each month — three francs apiece — sixty cents for a month's hard labor. I gave them twelve francs, and they were tickled to death. Then through the Vestiaire I got some warm things for Mélanie's and Maria's children for Christmas — a coat and dress for the little girl, and a doll and a purse filled with chocolate money covered with tinfoil (the kind Father used to enchant me with in East Orange days — he's had to keep follow-

ing it up, poor dear). Then for the little boy a coat and tiny trousers and blouse and necktie, and tin soldiers and candy. Louise has a little niece to whom I sent a dress and a *darling* doll's tea-set — I used to have a set like it for my big Jean. Well, I'm sure the kids were pleased, and I know that the mothers have been beaming ever since. Mélanie puts a hot-water bottle in my bed every night now.

In the morning it is very dark, and I am correspondingly sleepy. She knocks at my door and says, "Sept heures et demie, Mademoiselle, — la journée commence," and I turn over and in desperation sing (like Charles Woody), "Ferme la fenêtre, pour l'amour de Dieu!" Then I get up in the cold and light my candle — Madame won't turn on the electricity in the morning — and the day does commence. At night the light goes off at eleven, so I not only dress by yellow candle-light, but write by it also — as I'm doing now.

The coal situation is terrific. For the last few days we've had *no* heat and no fires. It is just like out-of-doors in my room, and I sit in my fur coat and comforter all the time. It rains endlessly. I never thought that depression from mere weather could get me, but when you don't see the sun for four weeks, the grayness gets in-

side of you. It gets dark at about half-past three or quarter of four. The other day I was walking down the Avenue de l'Opéra, and noticed that it was ten minutes past four. There was another clock beside the one I was looking at, which said quarter past eleven — New York time. It gave me a sort of a start, and I said right out loud, "Not even hungry for lunch yet."

December 26.

Great Heavens! I started this ten days ago, and stopped because I had no more paper — now it's after Christmas, and I have so *much* more to say, and so many, many things to thank you all for. We were all electrified at Father's cable about the Ford. Did any girl ever have such a good father! I will write him at once! Then the "New Republic," and Mother's letter, and yours. Please write me about the things that you alone can tell me. Your letter was *so* fine the way it referred to what I had said before, and so gave me an idea what I had written and what you had thought of it. I'm certain you think I'm bad about writing — I will try to do better.

My Christmas was a very pleasant one. On Saturday the 23d I helped trim the tree and do up packages at one of the smaller hospitals here.

Itwas Mrs. Lane who asked me to help, a charming American woman whose husband is head of the hospital. He had been called to the front by the illness of their son, one of the American Ambulance men near Verdun. Sunday night I went to the tree celebration, and it was a great experience. In the first place, the hospital is in an old French private mansion — hôtel, as they call it — and is quite a gorgeous place. What was once the salon was filled with convalescents, all well enough to be in uniform. At one end was the tree, the stage, and a piano, and at the other end we guests sat. All in between was a mass of soldiers in Joffre blue, laughing and jostling one another, expectant as children. There were a few musical numbers, and then a playlet with songs. I happened to be sitting by the mother of the girl in the playlet, and we had a beautiful time together. The girl was lovely, and how the men clapped and cheered!

Then there were speeches, and the tree was lighted. Before the presents were given out, the "Marseillaise" was sung. I had n't heard any singing here, — men together especially, — and to see them all facing the tree with the light on their faces, many of them pale, some bandaged, singing with their whole hearts, it was too much for me. Some had only one leg to stand on, and

had their arms around the next fellows' necks, some could n't see, and looked so *alone*. I would n't let any one see the tears in my eyes, for tears seemed to be *their* last thought.

It was very gay when the bags were distributed. Each man got some bonbons and some trifle, and pieces of holly and mistletoe, and there were snappers and caps, and things raffled off, and more speeches. The evening ended with "Vive la France!" and "Joyeux Noël," and again, "Vive la France!" I shall never forget it.

Love, and Happy New Year.

ESTHER.

VI

FROM MARJORIE

73 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea (*January* 4, 1917).

DEAREST DADDY: —

I have been having a delightful time — have seen a good many of the sights, and have been to the theater. The houses are pretty good, not crammed, but better than the average house has been in Boston for the last two years. The pit is always full. The plays are frightfully long-drawn-out, and I can't help thinking all the time that an American audience would never endure them, but they are bright and beautifully staged, which surprised me. We went to the Battle of the Somme pictures, and enjoyed them very much, if one can use the word "enjoy" for such interesting but harrowing pictures. There was a very small house, but they were charging regular theater prices, and the pictures have been here for a long time. The opera was good, and was particularly interesting to us, for Mr. Julius Harrison, who conducted, is a friend of the Smiths. It did seem strange to me to have them sing in English, and once in a while an

awful bit of Cockney would get in, such as in "Cavalleria," the fiery Alfio, in his rage at discovering his wife's infidelity, gave a wild leap on the stage and shrieked, "It's strienge, it's straeynge." That is as near to the spelling as I can get. There was a small but appreciative audience, and again the pit was crammed full — Tommies and their girls.

Chelsea is certainly much the most pleasant part of London to live in if one is an ordinary mortal — not a title, I mean. The houses have lots of personality, and make me think of Beacon Hill all the time. It is fun to compare them with the Boston houses and see just what the Americans have copied and what they ignored. I love the plumbing here; it is so very informal — the way it is all on the outside and usually down the front of the houses. One bath to seven rooms is the average, I gather. And that one bath is usually in the end of a hallway, or in a closet.

The weather is behaving in a true London fashion — was at first foggy, as I told you, and now is absurdly warm. I have not suffered from the cold, therefore, so far, and am waiting for my trials to begin in Paris along that line. I have been so lucky this far on my trip that I suppose something awful will soon happen to me, but I can look back to these weeks of com-

fort and good food when I starve on the Channel ship!

You will be disappointed to know that they have not done away with the dogs here, and that there are quantities of them everywhere! There is a dear little puppy in this household, which makes me think of how you would enjoy her, if only you were here.

I have so far had no difficulty in arranging affairs, and now with Dr. Page behind me, I think I shall be in Paris soon. I have found my various letters and papers valuable, and have been impressed with the courteous efficient officers I have met. I can very well see, though, that it would be impossible to get anywhere unless one knew exactly what one wanted to do, and where one was going, and had good evidence to back up one's statement.

Your loving daughter,

MARJE.

VII

FROM ESTHER

Paris, January 24, 1917.

Dearest Father: —

I dashed off a few words to you almost in my sleep the other night to be sure of having something on the Espagne. Sometimes I don't feel like getting out a bolt of wrapping-paper and beginning at the extreme end, and that was one of the times. I did manage to jot down a few theme sentences, however, and now I will proceed to talk.

To say that we are overjoyed with the Ford is to put it mildly! It is the ideal car and body for our purposes and we all feel much indebted to you, Father dear, and to Mr. Migel. Two perfectly lovely letters are on their way to him from Mrs. Shurtleff and me respectively. Mrs. Shurtleff would like to know the name of the dealer who gave the thirty-three dollars discount, to write him a note also. As for lettering, we shall have time to think of the flourishes when the car arrives. I am glad you did n't bother about it as Mrs. Shurtleff wants to have

an American flag underneath the name to let the French people see that it is an American work.

The American mail has just come, and such a dandy lot has come my way! I am sorry you have worried about the box sent November 15th; I acknowledged it last time, but I will say again how much appreciated everything was. The December 9th one came Thursday January 18th, which was very quick, as we count on six weeks for cases. I was as excited as a colt and went at it with hammer and tongs — in this case an old rusty axe and a pair of pinchers — and pulled forth joyfully the shirts, coats, and all the things. Certainly Mother does send jim-dandy things. I shed a few sentimental tears on the name-tag on Mr. Hathaway's coat and more tears when I did n't find my Oxford book or any peanut brittle! But the box did contribute something to me personally which was of the greatest value, which will appear later in my narrative.

It is touching to hear the refugees tell what they have tried to save from their old homes. If they have been driven to Paris by bombardment they have perhaps been able to save a couple of mattresses (so handy to travel with) or some blankets; but for the ones who have been

in the invaded country and have only recently been repatriated by the Germans, they rarely arrive here with anything but the clothes on their backs. The trip is eventful enough, usually, in trying merely to keep life going without juggling with furniture and extra clothes. They are sent from Northern France into Germany through Switzerland to Southern France and thence up to Paris. The traveling is not de luxe as you may imagine and takes many hours — days even. To get a vivid idea of the journey you should have it described by an old dame of seventy summers who has never set foot out of her native village before. She will sit with ten or twenty knitting needles flashing in her lap, her white cap tied neatly under her chin and rattle on in toothless but fluent patois reciting a series of experiences that you wonder she could ever have survived. Perhaps you can picture for yourself the effect of taking any old country woman that we know through the Dolomites under a hostile guard.

Highest praises are always given to the Swiss. They have given warm clothes, warm food, and a warm welcome to countless refugees that I have talked to.

What you say about the feeling in America, that France at the end of the war will be safe

from the encroachment of other nations for generations, sounds encouraging, but does that imply that the end of the war is a long way off? I have been astonished ever since coming to France to find the general expectation is for an early termination of hostilities — very early, this spring or next fall at the latest. My opinion was formed almost entirely by the "New Republic" and the Frank H. Simonds articles in the "Atlantic" and in the "Tribune," so that I considered the fall of 1918 to be the most logical time to hope for the end. What the Allies have to do seems still well-nigh insurmountable, but to my surprise, young and old, rich or poor, wise or foolish, seem sure that 1917 is, indeed, l'année de la victoire et de la paix. I can't tell whether it is because they wish it so hard or because to people who have seen and are living among the results of such tremendous desolation, it seems impossible for it to go on longer.

Please send more "New York Tribunes." You have no idea how they are appreciated by all of us. I took the ones Mother sent over to the Shurtleffs, then over to Mrs. Houpt's, then up to Miss Dorr's when I went to tea one afternoon, and when I asked some people in they were the features of my party. The W. E. Hill

drawing of "scenes in the hat department" brought down the house.

We have n't seen such good war pictures over here at all, and the pictures of the stage and society and art exhibitions, etc., are fascinating. It is wonderful to know that such things are going on. Then for news, the regular "Tribune" was gobbled up. We have only these punk French papers and the punker "New York Paris Herald," which costs three cents and consists of one sheet of four pages — of nothing. We read, "Quiet night on the front"; "Wilson presses investigation of ——, may write note to Germany"; and accounts of the London dog shows morning after morning. Take pity. And especially the magazine sections of the "Sunday Tribune," and more stuff by Hill!

Now for my Hymn of Hate which is in this case a Hymn of Heat. I am cold. This is a theme which has been elaborated in every degree of variation, and amplification since December 23, 1916, I think. I wrote you about that time that our steam heating had died suddenly and ingloriously, so it was with relief that I read in your letters of this morning no trace of worry about how I was managing to exist. All the old wiseacres that I meet, and this includes Mrs. Shurtleff, shake their heads and say, "If your

father and mother knew how you were living, what would they say?" and I think to myself, "They would probably think it was jolly well good for me — and that it was a terrific joke."

As I said, the Chauffage Central did n't *marché* on December 23, and had n't *marché*-d since. The proprietor says he can't get any coal, and this may be true enough, for the Seine has been rising and rising, and a few days ago was higher than at any time since the floods of '08. Great quantities of coal are at Rouen, but the transports can't get under the bridges to bring it to Paris, with the river so high. It seems that almost every one's proprietor was far-seeing enough to get in a huge supply last summer, but ours was probably strolling along some sunny beach and never gave the question a thought. To-day Mme. H—— heard that he has been laying in coal at his residence this last week, and still won't provide for us. The only indemnity he can be made to give is five francs a day per apartment, and it costs about two francs per room a day to keep heated by coal or wood. The five francs pays to keep alive the stove that Madame has had put in the dining-room and for the extra gas she uses in cooking.

And where do we come in, we pensionnaires? We buy our own coal or wood or petrol stove,

as the case may be, and it 's very hard on some of us, particularly Mlle. Germain. And on top of all this, we freeze.

I thought at first that it would be lovely to have a darling little fire every night, and I never thought what it would be to get hold of darling little logs and then make them burn. For a week or two it was more or less fun and very war-y, but the drawbacks begin to pall after weeks. You see the fireplace is only nineteen inches wide (I measured it with the little blue tape measure Mother gave me), and the logs I burn are about twelve inches long. So at best the heat penetrates to a maximum distance of five feet. And finally the logs they send me are wet — and you can't get kindling. If you could imagine the amount of time I have spent kneeling in my fur coat before the miniature fireplace trying to light a couple of wet logs with an old copy of the "Herald," you would certainly smile. Here's where the cases from home came in strong. Our good helper Agatha and I split them into kindling and made two bundles and I carried them home. It is typical of the Latin Quarter that no one gave me a second glance as I strode along the street with a big bundle of wood on each shoulder. They burned as nothing ever has burned in my sight before. I told Mrs. Shurtleff

that I was going to write next for a case of kindling from America!

Fortunately it is not as cold here as it is in New York, although this confounded thermometer means so little to me that I can't tell you just what it is. Some days it 's zero, others it 's 2, and in the house it 's 5 or 7, and it feels just as cold as that would be on good old Fahrenheit. It 's just as cozy to live in my room these days as it would be to live in a tent out on Place Denfert-Rochereau. I can see my breath if I care to look, but I'm tired of it as we approach the fifth week. I wear my fur coat most of the time and sometimes my hat, and settle down on a hassock in front of whatever fire there is, to read. I have tried wearing gloves, but the pages stick so that I lose in temper what I make up for in warmth. To play my piano is like playing on icicles. But I play just the same and then go into the kitchen to warm my hands. I have Louise put some of my wet logs on the back of the stove when she has been cooking and it has dried them out fairly successfully.

You can imagine what getting up in the morning is like. If it were n't immodest I'd like to dress out on my balcony, for I think the temperature would be an improvement. The very walls of the room are cold, they have n't

been heated for so long. And as for touching the bare floor or a door-handle! Really, had I the tongue of Greeks or Jews or possibly Siberians or Esquimaux I would describe our home atmosphere, which makes itself felt as it whistles under the doors and around the windows — but not unless. But I would n't think of moving even if I knew of any warm place to go. The people are just like a big family and I'll never desert Mme. H. — Micawber. It will be lovely in the spring.

And after all I love my little fire "that goes in and out with me." And I feel so settled here. I never wake up in the morning any more and say like the bewildered little darky, "Whar me!" and when I open the front door at night I feel that I never really belonged anywhere else.

What I look forward to all day is getting into bed at night. I slide in between the icy sheets and find the tin bed-warmer that Olive gave me, and then way down at the bottom a hot, squashy, hot-water bag. I tuck the comforter in tight, and pull my fur coat up over my head and stay there suffocated until I'm sure my nose is warm enough not to keep me awake, then I uncover cautiously and slowly go off to sleep. When once asleep nothing could wake me up — not the

Allies victorious or the Heavenly trump. But before I go to sleep I have a fine chance to think over happy things of the past and I do love it. I think of what fun we used to have at Northampton, especially those two years at the Lodge. It seems too wonderful to be true now, to think of living not merely with people who were girls your own age and spoke English, but your very own best friends that you would pick out from all the world. All living together under one roof!

When it was cold like this there was skating on Paradise, and after giving three looks at our history in the evening, a bunch of us would go down to the boat-house and put on our skates and go out and skate by the electric light and moonlight combined. Then when we were frozen, we'd come in and warm ourselves by the huge fireplace, leave our skates, and go down town to Kingsley's for some hot chocolate and whipped cream. When the moon shone full on the white snow it gave the luster of midday all right. I can just hear how our footsteps crunched and the snow squeaked, it was so cold. As we'd be drinking our chocolate some one would look down the street at the town clock and cry, "It's quarter of ten! !" and we'd dash out of the place and run like mad up Main

Street, turn to the left at the watering-trough, up West Street, down Arnold Avenue, and pound up the kitchen steps of the Lodge. Usually we got there just as the college clock was striking ten. We'd fly up the back stairs and undress in the dark and jump into bed. "Nothing on our minds but our hair!" It seems so long ago.

This letter is going very slowly, I'm afraid. If I could only write with my left hand, it would n't be so bad, but I have to keep stopping to put my right on the hot-water bag to keep my fingers going. They look like carrots, anyway. Please tell Aunt Esther that I have become a mad devotee of hot water as a beverage. This ought to put new life into her, for I have always felt that she never quite recovered from the obstinate way I used to take the pitcher of hot water, regularly delivered to me on a tray flanked conspicuously with a cup and saucer, dump the contents into the bowl and bathe comfortably and leisurely. This at the age of eight. Now all is changed. I drink what is brought piping hot for me to use to bathe in, and bathe in the dispirited contents of my night-blooming hot-water bag. Such is age — and Paris.

Now the results of this constant warfare be-

tween man and the elements are twofold. I first might say that my flesh is brilliantly branded by the various applications, too arduously embraced, so that it looks as though giant postage stamps had been applied promiscuously over my huge gaunt frame. Secondly, I am a bit done up. With my room fairly uninhabitable it has been against nature to refuse as many of the cordial (and warm) invitations that have been given me as would have been consistent with wisdom — certainly ag'in' *my* nature, and I have tired myself with trotting back and forth from one fireside to another on top of the new forms of work that I have been adapting myself to. I have gone out a great deal to tea, and sometimes in the evening, too, and have n't rested very much. Yet it's little comfort to come home and rest when you're shivering!

However, I'm not a bit discouraged about anything — one must find out one's strength somehow — and please don't worry. By the time you get this I shall probably be blooming.

I heard "Faust," with Mary Aiken and her mother a week ago Saturday — the only time since Mother took Olive and Franklin and me eleven years ago, when it was my first opera. It was glorious! I seemed to know it all and what I did n't know was lovely too. We had dandy

seats in the parterre — only seven francs seventy centimes, the seventy centimes being a tax for the poor, imposed on all theater and opera seats. Do you remember when we used to struggle and squeak through "Anges purs, anges radieux"? — where it goes up a key each time? I find myself singing, "Salut, demeure chaste et pure," as I turn my chilled footsteps toward Place Denfert-Rochereau sometimes — so chaste and pure that there is no sybaritic allurement even in the fireplace.

I must tell you how wonderful that child Gile Davies has been to me. Every week since I've been gone I've had a note, sometimes a long letter from her; and not a word did I write until Christmas-time. To cap the climax, I received a package a day or two ago — a Christmas present. It was a baby blue satin handkerchief bag that she had made herself, with a handkerchief and a sachet inside. It seemed great to see anything so pretty and useless after so many flannel waists and boots and trousers and all the homely things that are so indispensable. In the bottom of the box was the most precious of all — an enlargement of the picture Martha took of Gile one morning when she was putting up the flag at Bailey's — Gile in a middy blouse with the sun full on her, just turning to smile as she's

pulling the ropes; and Harpswell and the Sound in the distance.

When I found that, on top of the handkerchief and the sachet, I just opened the bag and risked all the blue satin lining by crying into it. Oh, I never saw anything look so sweet.

I think I was even gladder about what you wrote of wearing my circle scarf-pin for my sake, than about the Ford; though maybe it's wicked. I can forgive with abandon, and picture with tenderness the cruel and unusual neckties in which it probably nestles. My one fear is that you may waste too much affection on me when I'm away, thinking that I have changed. I have n't at all, malheureusement. It's just that blessings apparently seem to brighten immediately after taking flight. I never do anything wonderful at all. I sometimes get tired clear through and wish there were some one to manage things for me — some one to take me out — some one else to buy the tickets — some one else to order the taxi — some one else to decide what to do. I just long to get all dressed up and go out somewhere and see people in evening clothes. Sometimes I feel that I'd rather put on a pair of long white gloves than put off the old man! You can see from that.

Remember that if I'm your little tin-god-

on-wheels, you're mine, and I think of you every day, no matter what I'm doing, and send you oceans of love, not only for all your kindness to me and others, but because I love you, anyway.

Good-night to you all,

ESTHER.

Dear Father, don't worry, I'm going to get a stove.

VIII

FROM MARJORIE

Villa des Dames,
79 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, Paris.
(*January* 25, 1917.)

DEAR DADDY: —

Well, the impossible has happened! I am plunged into reckless expense after having restrained myself for over a week. Yesterday afternoon I came back from the Vestiaire with a great deal of typewriting to do. I found my room a little colder than usual, — which was too much, — so I just sailed downstairs and demanded a fire! Such excitement you never saw. The head of the hôtel and his wife both came tearing up and wanted to know if "Mademoiselle was cold" — with the marvelous steam heat going full tilt (!). I said yes, I *was* cold, and that I must have a fire at *once* — so I got it. They were most apologetic because it had to be a wood fire — but I was delighted. I then lit my candles — ordered tea, and after getting all warm *in*side, just sat down and toasted myself! You don't know, you can't possibly imagine, the divine joy I got from that little fire of only two

pieces of wood at a time! I did not tell Miss W. that I had it for a while, because I wanted to enjoy it all by myself. When I did tell her, she was as thrilled as I was, and we two just sat over it and nursed it all afternoon and evening! I do not know how much it cost me, — I did n't dare ask, — but I do know that for the *first* time since I left my room in the Belmont I have been truly so warm that I am comfortable! I have had it again this afternoon, and am now sitting by its dying embers before I go to bed. Miss W. is sitting opposite me reading. We are both — wonder of wonders — sweater*less*. You do not know what all this means, but I can assure you after I worked in two sweaters and a coat, with my fur coat around my knees, and stopping to blow on my fingers every few minutes, I decided that it was plain silly, and that I would move my table, which was put *in* the fireplace, — to suggest, as it were, that there is *now* no need of a fire, — and investigate the chimney. I was so pleased to find that it is a peach of a one, and draws beautifully. By strict economy I have only used one basket of wood in the two days, and that cannot be very, very extravagant. Also I am going out to buy my own wood tomorrow, and bring it home under my arm, for I know it will be less than what they will charge

me here, — so picture me as wandering through the streets with a load of wood under my arm in true Parisian fashion! But also picture my once barely livable room turned into a positive hotbed — it must be 68° in here, I am sure! I may have to give up going in the underground and have to walk everywhere, — it will be so expensive, — *but* I will always from now on have a *warm* room to work and rest in! You are probably saying, "What a lot of fuss over a fire," but you do not know how I have been trying to figure out just how much I could stand and how much I could not. I do not mind working at the Vestiaire in the cold, for I am always active; but I have got to have it decently warm when I sit and type for three hours at a time, and I am so thrilled to find that this comparatively small fireplace has such very excellent effects.

I can tell you little Marje is so grateful to Sears-Roebuck Company that she is seriously considering putting them in her prayers! I sleep under Sears-Roebuck blankets, wear their flannel nighties and underclothes, and use their pen, paper, and pins! The French idea of blankets seems to be something as *heavy* as possible, with the least possible warmth in it!

Miss W. says that I am to tell you that I already look better than when I first came. I have

a wonderful appetite, and only hope that I will not by any unfortunate chance grow *out* of any of my warm things!

When I get home I expect to put your Miss K. out of the office, I am becoming such an expert typist! It is rather amusing to come way over here and type so much, but just now that and "visiting" is what they need most. I expect to work after a time on the tuberculosis cases under a very nice elderly gentleman whose name I cannot remember, and also to drive the auto a good deal. Esther Root, one of the workers, has just had a car (Ford, of course) sent to her by her father, and when it arrives we are going to Bordeaux to drive it up here. Won't that be great? We hope it will get here soon, for we need it frightfully. There is so much to be carried around — furniture and such — when we move a family, which we do quite often.

Oh, I do hope that Mother is not going to worry too much about me, now that I am at last in such good hands. I never saw a much nicer, kinder, more thoughtful set of workers. Now that I shall be *warm* and I am very well fed, indeed, I am as happy as can be. I think that I shall work in to be fairly useful after a time.

We keep hearing rumors of sugar-cards, no more bakeries open, and all sorts of things. I

shall be interested to see if the new laws really come into effect the first of February. Even if they do, I do not believe that it will affect us very much. As usual, the poorer people will have the hardest part of it to bear.

The more I see of Dr. and Mrs. Shurtleff, the more I like them; they are so simple. It is quite wonderful to me to see how this work of Mrs. Shurtleff's has grown up. The whole institution is run very smoothly and very thoroughly. She takes it all very calmly and keeps it all in hand without giving the appearance of being what you would call a "business woman." She always has time to be more than polite and kind. She takes the trouble to drop in to see me, for instance, when I know perfectly well how busy she is. She writes the greater part of the "thank-you" letters herself, and that alone is a terrific job. She is almost an exact opposite to Mrs. ——, and yet it is wonderful to see how she has kept this work up to standard and how she has enlarged it, and is every day, almost, enlarging. Since I have come, for instance, she has started a grocery store department, and the special tubercular department. Altogether I am thoroughly enjoying "watching the wheels go round," and I think I shall be able to do my bit towards pushing. I do not see how I could have

Dr. and Mrs. Shurtleff in the Office

found a pleasanter, more fitting job for a girl of my age.

Until I got warmed up yesterday, I had the keenest sympathy with one "Sam McGee" in one of Robert Service's poems, — who, you probably remember, never was warm until he finally sat in his "crematorium"!

I must stop now. I hope that you have been able to read this. I used a pen to-night because I have typed so much all day I was tired of it! Lots and lots of love from your daughter

MARJE.

IX

FROM MARJORIE

Villa des Dames,
79 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, Paris.
(*February* 4, 1917.)

DEAREST FAMILY: —

Oh, Mother and Daddy, this work here is *so* interesting. Now that I have settled down to it more, and can see what I am doing and where it all leads to, I am very, very interested. I think that I shall be useful, too. My typewriter has n't stopped clicking for many hours since I came. It is now being adjusted over Sunday, and they are going to give me a price on having the French accents put on it. I tried to exchange it for a French keyboard one, same machine, Corona, of course, but find it would cost twenty dollars, which is an absurd price, I think. Of course, they are selling so many here, they can ask what they want. However, I jollied the lady a good deal, and she is going to see how much it would cost to add the *accents* only to mine, — for you see it takes a lot of extra, and just now pretty valuable, time, to go back over every page and put on the accents. If they give me a

good price, I think I shall do it out of the money Mr. M. gave me.

I have been put in entire charge of the mail now, and, therefore, I try to get to the Vestiaire by twenty minutes to nine, which gives me twenty minutes free all to myself to get the letters opened at least, and somewhat sorted. I am becoming a regular Sherlock Holmes when it comes to guessing at names, addresses, and whether the letters are from soldiers' wives, cultivated persons, or the regular appeals! After I sort them, I head them with the last name, the address, and the arrondissement, and then file what I can, and deliver the rest to the various workers who are by this time assembling, and, as I have chosen the mantelpiece for my desk, pro tem., I find every one gathers towards the fire, which saves me lots of time! Because I am new, and the streets are so very peculiar to me still, and it takes longer to look over a French letter than it would an English one, I do not get ready for calling until about 9.45. Then I get off, the others having paired off and started soon after 9.10. Call all morning, but usually only three visits, for it takes time to get all the details we want, and, as it is really pretty much up to the visitor and her report as to what the conference votes Saturday, we don't hurry, but try

to give them each their due, as it were. When I was home, of course, I thought that I knew what the war over here meant, but now I am beginning to realize that if I stayed here the rest of my life (which I hope I will not have to do, even with the new international complications), I would find new horrors, new complications and results every day. Of course, the object of our visiting is to determine whether the family deserves what it has asked for, and also to decide if they deserve what we can do, but they never *dream* of asking us to move them. Of course, the greatest difference between our work here and the ordinary visiting done by social service workers at home, is that *usually* the people at home have brought their present condition of misery on *themselves* in one way or another, while these poor souls over here have not. They have had homes, gardens, rabbits, and savings, which they tell you about as a rule with pleasure, and not emotionally. (That is one thing, these people have suffered so they do not weep any more.) These people *used* to help others a little, and were driven out in various horrible and less horrible ways, — marching for days on foot, a whole family, old and young, and not able to save anything, and some families separated forever, perhaps by the blowing up of a bridge

behind them to keep back the "Boches." We have one family who got across a bridge just in time. The mother and two youngest children they saw on the other side before the bridge was blown up, and they have never heard of or from them since. Then the days of walking, sleeping in caves, sometimes for weeks, eating only when chance put food in their ways; women having their babies born in straw in cellars under bombardment, and the children *surviving*, sometimes. Then after weeks of this, they arrive here, for it is certainly true of Paris as of Rome, that "all roads lead to Rome," to find that they being *refugees* must pay rent. No one wants to take them in when they have many children. The Government is wonderful the way it does give its "allocation" to them. The Mairies give coal once a month and potatoes twice; and the schools give sabots or jalottes every three months. But even with this, it is hard, after having had a "home," to live in hôtels all in one room, or two at the most (and these people that were a pretty good class of persons formerly). I don't know whether their mental as well as physical suffering is more pitiful than those common miners' families, refugees who always lived a squalid life, but whose actual physical misery is usually worse than the first class.

Of course, the Parisians have a certain definite advantage right from the first, because, according to law, they do not have to pay rent; that is, none who have a member at the front, and goodness knows that includes all Parisiennes, at any rate. This law does not refer to refugees, so you see it makes a good big difference in the comparative cost of living.

I suppose that it must be the Rockefeller Foundation that gives so many of these people from the "pays envahis" such excellent aid if they pass through Switzerland. We hear over and over again that in "Suisse on est bien traité."

Just at present, things are very busy here, for Mrs. Shurtleff is opening two new départements, — grocery and tuberculosis. The former will be invaluable, for so many of the people are sick through lack of proper food; and, after all, with one franc twenty-five centimes a day allocation for the wife or mother, and seventy-five centimes per day for the children under sixteen years, and only fifty centimes per kid if there is no member at the front, with the average family now, with the very varying rent, sometimes very high and other times comparatively low, it is, even with a small supply of coal and potatoes (erratically given, for the most part),

hard for a family that is run down, after the exposures and general strain of their flight, to have enough money left, when they have paid their rent, to buy very *nourishing* and very *much* food. It is most interesting to find every day new twists and turns as to what the different Comités and Mairies will and will not do. They are cutting down on everything as much as they can, and you can hardly blame them. But the inconsistencies are amusing at times; — one family does not get its "allocation de réfugié," generally known as "chaumage" (differing from "allocation militaire" in that it is given, although there is no member of the family at the front), because they have only four children! Yet if there were five children or more, they would receive only four pairs of shoes from the schools every three months, so whatever you have in the way of a family is a drawback; but if you have no children at all, you are worse off than ever!!

In one way the poor children are better off, from my way of thinking, in one detail, — the poorer they are the heavier *stockings* they wear, and as they grow richer, the stockings become less and less, until the really rich, swell, Commonwealth-Avenue children go about with socks and purple knees!

We each of us have our "pet families" whom

we want to do little extra things for, and I have already acquired one family — a very extra special, nice, self-respecting one, who won me among other things by telling me she opened the window in her room twice a day to change the air! — an absolutely unheard-of thing in this land! The woman has three dear little children, two who go to school and a lovely little baby. They are all so clean, and the tiny room is spotless. The eldest boy is now sixteen, and has just been operated on for appendicitis, and has gone to some friends in the country to rest after the operation. The mother and three children spent a *month* in caves before she came here. The father is at the front, of course, — is a wire-layer for telephone and telegraph service. He does lookout work, sitting in tree-tops with spy-glasses and hoisted on top of poles to try to discover the enemy's guns and positions, — all of which is very dangerous work. Enough of all this; — I did not realize how I had rambled on.

I want you and Daddy to know that I have been writing so hard that I never heard the luncheon bell at all!! I am now eating my various kinds of crackers with one hand, while I finish this with the other! I shall have a splendid excuse to have a *very* plentiful tea this afternoon, which will be very nice. I can tell you I think

that I could stand a several days' siege with my well-stocked wardrobe.

Lots and lots of love to all the family from your very happy and busy daughter,

MARJE.

This letter, although probably late, brings many, many happy returns of the day to you, Mother dear.

P.S. Having re-read this letter, I have to apologize for the writing. I am terribly sorry it is so messy. I guess I got excited and tried to go as fast as the typewriter does!

X

FROM ESTHER

On train from Pau, Saturday, February 24, 1917.

Dearest Father: —

A telegram came to me a week ago, just as I was about to return to Paris, telling me that the Ford had arrived at Bordeaux and to stay in Pau until further notice. So I have been *put* in Pau since then, having one *more* extra week. It has been glorious.

But nothing so glorious as the news that our darling Ford is on French soil — or in French docks or wherever it is. A letter from Mrs. Shurtleff unfolds this plan for me to meet her and Marjorie Crocker in Bordeaux and drive the car up to Paris. Our road lies straight through the château country. With weather and reasonable luck with the car we ought to manage to get some fun out of it. Mrs. Shurtleff and Marjorie would be my choice of companions, and the heart of France with a long straight road my choice of place.

My "permis de conduire" hangs in mid-air. No word has been said of it, but I know I must

have one. The more I concentrate on the genus Ford, the less I can remember about it; and to start off with an air in a new car and in a strange city will be a sensation, at least. However, I'll do anything once. The last time I drove a car was when I took Mrs. Perkins for a national excursion down the sylvan ways of Connecticut. I hardly expected then to have as my next passenger a frowning French prefect of police through the heart of Bordeaux. We shall see.

Yesterday afternoon is one of the pleasantest that I have to look back on in adorable Pau. Sudden inspiration seized me in the early afternoon and I bought a sketch-book. Possibly Harold's charming drawings, made in the country and at the front, planted ambitions in my unaspiring pencil that I had hitherto ignored. Anyway, I bought a businesslike appareil and wandered around the château seeking the most appealing detail. I chose my point of attack and settled myself down on the curbstone with my muff as a cushion. A few yards away a real artist was working, with stool, easel, board, and other paraphernalia. I could almost hear his brush scratch the canvas and feel his withering eye on my back. Undismayed, I maintained my lowly position and scratched on for my own

part with unabashed enjoyment. The afternoon sun gave long shadows and "touched the Sultan's turret with a shaft of light." It was magical.

I had almost finished when some boys came running out to play. They were little chaps in the inevitable black aprons, and on their heads the round sailor tams topped by a rosette. Some clustered around the artist, the rest looked over my shoulder. They began to take sides. "Pas mal çà," said one sitting on the curb beside me. "L'autre est mieux," genially put in another. At that several champions sprang magnanimously forward — I say magnanimously, for really my efforts were n't too successful. Age and weather and the piecemeal way in which the château was built have given it that irregularity which is charming. The towers tilt and the roofs sag in a way to make Bob's architectural soul recoil; but I have rendered these with such unstinted charm that in general perspective the château seems to have aged several centuries. One rosy eight-year-old shook his head and declared vehemently: "Je mettrais quinze jours à faire un tel dessein!" I asked him if they taught drawing in school. It seems that every Tuesday and Friday "one" draws pitchers and cups and casseroles and that day the whole class

had drawn his whistle. One day they draw the map of États-Unis. "Oh," I said, "c'est de là que je viens, moi."

Then began a thousand questions, and I related what wonders I could, for joy to see the many eyes grow rounder and rounder. There are buildings in New York — I told them — there were buildings in New York ten times as high as the château. "Pas possible!" was the general verdict. My eight-year-old pushed his way out of the crowd and ran to the corner of the street. "Dis donc, Julien!" he called out, "viens ici, écouter ce qu'il y a aux États-Unis!" Another boy came running from the house and joined him, and I saw him out of the corner of my eye, pointing out the tower of the château with astounding comments. I went on describing the elevators in the high buildings and how fast they went. But they had never seen an elevator. He who has missed a French elevator cannot complain of any great lack, but it certainly does heighten the difficulty of fifty-eight stories. I had finished. My pals started to go off, lured on by some one's "prelotte" (hop-scotch stone). I said, "Vous pouvez dire hop-scotch?" They all tried in different tones and tempos — and it was drôle comme tout. We all burst out laughing and I started on my way. "'Voir, Mam'selle,"

they called after me, lifting their "bonnets" and waving. I walked home smiling.

What I should have missed if the sketch-book had n't inspired me — or if French were an unknown tongue — or if you had n't let me come to France!

You have doubtless known and detested hotel children — the spoiled darlings of elevator boys and hotel habitués; so you will be grieved to know that you have raised one. At my time of life — it is only a second childhood, I know; but this month at Pau has given me a luscious taste of being petted. The Hôtel de Londres is small and English. Every one greets every one else in the dining-room, every one shares in hotel newspapers, and every one promenades on the boulevard. Getting acquainted is easy and interesting, but for my first two weeks I did nothing but sleep and read. My third week was the week that Harold and the boys left, and as they did n't get their definite orders until Saturday, we had to say farewell nearly every day.

This week has been my week of expecting a telegram, so I have steadily made the best of the last moment, and really feel that some of those wonderful English people are my friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Moody are my favorites. She is tall and majestic and her face is a mass of little

wrinkles like the ripples when you drop a pebble in a pool. Mr. Moody is little and bald and white-haired and coughing, and must always have his rug. He has explained the Crimean War to me from A to Izzard and traced a genealogy of the French kings by memory.

Then there's Mr. Heyworth, a sort of a William Gillette man from India, who was torpedoed on the Arabic; a young French aviator and his wife, very good-looking both of them; and a Russian lady who in a desperation of loneliness took a great shine to me, which I successfully counteracted by having her teach me the Russian alphabet. Last of all, there was a little French girl, — Bernadotte, — whose mother, an American, died three weeks ago, and whose father is at the front. If she had had any less than two governesses to keep her away from people, I should n't have had a show as the hotel baby.

Well, we played bridge and walked and took tea and went driving and had a splendid time. Aunt Ella studies all morning, never takes tea, and goes to bed early, so that I have been a great deal with these other people. Mr. Moody called me "m'dear" and patted my hand, and Mrs. Moody teased me in the most tremendously ladylike way, and we had a splendid time. When

my telegram finally came, it seemed very sudden; and they were no end nice about my going. Mrs. Moody said how much she would miss the Donna of the next room. (We had become acquainted by my hearing them gargle and their hearing me laughing over my letters from home, and singing "La Donna e Mobile" to myself.) One day I called Mr. Moody's attention to the fact that I had changed my time of departure. He said, "Quite in keeping, my dear. La Donna e Mobile!" As I was finally going, he, in the sweetest way and the most *English* English, quoted what Boswell said when he heard of Johnson's death. "The gayety of nations is eclipsed," and said that he hoped to encounter the gayety in Paris. I said that I hated to go, but, — and here, Plagiarism, gentle presence! lit on my brow, — "This Donna likes to be en automobile." It proved to be a wonderful exit speech.

Even Teresa said she regretted my going, "On s'amuse bien quand M'lle est là," and when I said, "Hasta luego!" she answered feelingly, "Hasta luego!" — perhaps our most felicitous Spanish conversation.

It has been more than I had dreamed, this stay in Pau. The mountains, the country, the aviation, and the people. I tried to repay the

kindness that was shown me, and I realize that young people and happy people are scarce now, so that any one of my age and spirits would have had as cordial a reception. Those older folk were lonely and I was different, that's all. C'est la guerre.

We are passing through lovely country. It is sunset-time and the shepherd boys are driving home their sheep in an orange haze. The man opposite us looks like the villain in the play — black mustache, derby well over the eyes, black velvet brocaded waistcoat, and gold ball cuff-buttons. I expected him to draw a Smith & Wesson on me a short time ago, but it was three pills (like shoe-buttons) that he had. He gulped them down and is now sleeping innocuously like a baby of two.

My writing is only a trifle less awful than the roadbed — Bordeaux!

Love.

ESTHER.

XI

FROM ESTHER

Paris, March, 1917.

DEAREST FATHER:—

I have never told you enough about our trip up from Bordeaux, and so many things happened that were interesting and the effects of the trip have been so lasting that I want very much to put you au courant.

We left on a Wednesday for Angoulême, which was a beautiful day's run. The weather was superb, and it seemed too good to be true that we were actually flying down the famous poplar-edged roads of France in our own little car. We reached Angoulême at sunset-time. If you have ever been there, you will remember the wonderful situation of the city. It rises high in the center of a plain and the walk around the walls affords a beautiful view. After getting settled in the hotel, we made the circuit of the town and watched the shades of a pink and gold sunset slowly deepen into the purple of twilight.

I rose early the next morning, before the

others were up, and took a few pictures. I had a lovely ramble among the old churches.

It was on leaving Angoulême that I cleverly took the wrong road, which added fully fifty kilometres to our day's run. We found ourselves at about two o'clock in La Rochefoucauld. Everywhere we were in search of essence, and as we found plenty of it there, Marje forgave my stupidity. As we knew we could make Poitiers that night, anyway, Mrs. Shurtleff said that it made no difference. After having given one look at the lovely château, I felt personally very pleased with myself. We had luncheon at a funny little inn, which was so stuffy inside that we insisted upon having them serve our omelets on the front porch. They thought, of course, that we were crazy and the windows were crowded with faces showing ill-concealed curiosity.

We went up to the château and found an old woman there who was glad to take us around. The present Duke and Duchess of La Rochefoucauld have not lived in the château since the beginning of the war. She is an American with millions who has restored most lavishly but in the best possible taste the interior of the fine old castle. The only son and heir died, at the age of seven, a few years ago. A charming marble bust

of the child placed in the chapel gave a pathetic note to the whole place. We stopped at Ruffec that afternoon, having been advised not to miss the place where they manufacture pâtés de foie gras and truffles. The fattest woman I ever saw has a little shop in a courtyard where the finest canned goods are put up. She showed us her storeroom of thousands of cans, and I felt like buying a couple of thousand until I found out how much she charged. As it was, we bought six or seven cans, arguing that it was pure economy to eat pâté with bread at the side of the road instead of going to a hotel for luncheon every day.

We made Poitiers that night just after dark, dead tired. We slept late in the morning and had a terrific time making the car start. We had time to stop only at a few stores before going on our way, so that at the present writing I can't tell you the difference in the general topography between Poitiers and Jersey City. One thing I do remember is that Harold made a careful note, on the guide that he wrote out for me, that the Field of the Cloth of Gold was near Poitiers; and as I am a perfect sight-seeing fiend I was bound that I would see it. While manicuring the car in the garage and pouring gasoline and oil into every joint and crevice, I tried to find out from

the garage-man where I could find (and here Marje disappeared inside the bonnet) "le champs de l'étoffe d'or." He thought it was a part of the car and said that he was sure that it was not *that* that was out of order. I gave up the search and found when I reached Paris that such Field is near Dieppe, a good three hundred miles from Poitiers.

I have mentioned stores, I believe. Well, it was here that Folly for the first time in many well-ordered months jumped out of my pocket. I have always been crazy about leopards, as you know; especially this winter I have wanted to get a leopard's skin, but I did not think that even the "miscellaneous" column in my accounts would justify the purchase of any jungle trophies. I asked at Revillon's one day the price of a perfect beauty that was in the window, and found that it was three hundred francs. In Poitiers Marje and I were walking innocently down a side street looking for some crackers and jam and a chamois skin through which to strain the gasoline, when, suddenly, I saw in the window a little yellow leopard that just twined himself around my heart! I soon had him spread out on the counter and was haggling with the woman over the price. She said sixty francs, with tears in her eyes. I objected strenuously and Marje

walked off in the other direction. She hates me when I am trying to "marchander" and suddenly pretends that she is not with me and does n't know me, which is absurd when we are often the only two American girls in the town. Well, I bought the leopard — "Leo" on further acquaintance — for forty francs, and this time tears were in the very voice of his former mistress. We left Poitiers in a cloud of dust, not having seen one building, one church, or one view. Baedeker lay sulking in the back of the car, but Marje was correspondingly exultant. There is a certain antipathy between Marje and a statistic which may be noticed. We had luncheon by the side of the road with Leo as guest of honor. I thought Mrs. Shurtleff would die of laughter when she saw him and when she discovered a large bald spot on his left shoulder. We all laughed so that we could hardly negotiate another truffle! I must tell you that weeks afterwards, when I told Aunt Ella that I had bought a leopard skin in Poitiers, expecting her to throw up her hands at such foolishness, she sat up straight and said: "You did? Oh! I wish I had known there were leopard skins in Poitiers, — I just love them."

Tours was our next stop. We went straight to the cathedral, which is very lovely. As we

Marjorie and Mrs. Shurtleff, with the Leopard Skin

walked around toward the back, I saw a beautiful black dog tied to a little push-cart and approached it making appropriate remarks. Quick as a wink it jumped up and bit me, tearing my dress, but giving me only a scratch. This was considered very funny, as I had been remarking what a way I had with animals. I have since learned that such dogs are trained to bite anything that approaches the push-cart in its master's absence.

Marje was particularly anxious to go the rounds of the antique shops in Tours. Her mother and father had once spent a good deal of time there, and she was anxious to see the city and also to try to match some china that her mother had bought there. I usually stiffen my neck and keep my eyes front when I see an antique shop and especially since Leo has come into my life! I have been really meticulous in my studied inattention! But here we positively ran into the jaws of the enemy. Marje bought a million dollars' worth of gorgeous dark blue and gold cups, the kind that are supposed to be made only in Tours. I came off with a little imitation one for two francs, fifty centimes, which will mean as much to me when I drink tea from it with Leo at my back.

From Tours we ran along the edge of the

Loire. We were weary of asking for essence, so you can imagine our delight to be able to get as much as we wanted just outside of the city. You see, essence is practically unobtainable in Paris, and at best at a very high figure, so that we were anxious to get enough to run on for a while until we should be able to get a special order from the Ministère de la Guerre on account of ours being a work for charity.

We spent that night at Amboise. It was bitterly cold, but wonderfully picturesque. The hotel faced on the water front, and up the hill, and on the right, was a lovely château. The "Cheval blanc," as the hotel is called, was very quaint, but, like all things quaint, as cold as an iceberg. We sat around the little stove in the dining-room after dinner and did our accounts, no simple matter. We got to laughing so over the state of our affairs that our additions and subtractions — chiefly subtractions — showed the effects, no doubt. That famous black velvet hat of mine I had worn down in the train when I went to Pau, not knowing that I should make the trip home in a Ford ambulance. Fortunately I had my little brown hat with me to wear back, but the body of the car was so congested, with our gasoline, our suitcases, the thermos bottles, Marje's china, and the automobile tools,

that the hat suffered considerably — to put it mildly.

At Amboise Mrs. Shurtleff admitted that she had been very ill during the night. She wanted to go to Chenonceaux just the same, however. We gave only a fleeting glance at the gem of all the châteaux and hurried on to Blois. I was driving that morning and I shall never forget the ride. Mrs. Shurtleff was really suffering badly and freezing cold; she was anxious to get the first train to Paris to get home to her husband. So, of course, you can imagine what a hurry we were in, but the roads were rough and full of country carts, and I could see that driving fast made her nervous. It was cold and windy, as I have said; but I had my coat open and was covered with perspiration by the time we crossed the bridge and arrived at Blois.

We took Mrs. Shurtleff to a little hotel close to the railroad-station, where she lay down and begged us to leave her and go off and have a good time. We said that we would and that we would come back in plenty of time to put her on the 7.40 train for Paris. We had n't had anything to eat all day and were too tired to think; and the thought of the château was a little too much for us. So we went to a pâtisserie for some hot chocolate. We ate every cake in the place

and got up so much spunk that we decided to give the château the once over. It was late and the place was supposed to be closed, but a nice guide took us through. When we returned we found Mrs. Shurtleff a little better, and with one grand effort she rose and took the train.

We went to a comfortable hotel and did n't waste much time in getting between the sheets. The next day was fine, and Marje suggested going to Chaumont and Chambord and not trying to get to Paris until the following day. She said that as long as she reached Paris by Sunday night it would be all right. So we went to that heavenly Chaumont, my favorite of all the châteaux, — do you remember my writing enthusiastically about Blois on the way down to Pau? It was the castle of Chaumont that I thought was the castle of Blois, and it is as fascinating when you actually visit it as it is from the train; but as for Blois I never want to see it again. Chaumont is filled with beautiful tapestries and furniture. The situation high over the Loire is magnificent, and it is the only château that we saw which is set in a large park, studded with great trees. How I hated to hurry away! In the afternoon we went to Chambord, which is a marvel of construction, but cold and unromantic. It is hardly furnished at all and its

most interesting feature is the promenade on the roof, where you walk in and out among its three hundred and sixty-five chimneys. We arrived in Orléans at about five o'clock and went straight to the cathedral. Jeanne d'Arc completely dominates the city and the cathedral; the latter is to me one of the most beautiful I have ever seen, being harmonious throughout in style and period. The stained glass is uniform — modern, of course — telling the story of the "Pucelle de France." Marje and I clung to each other in the fading light and drank in the quiet and beauty of those great arches.

We went to a very nice hotel, and in engaging a room we asked the proprietor how far it was to Paris. We said we wanted to be sure to make it by Sunday night. He said: "But this is Sunday night." We looked at him amazed and gave in to his whim for the moment. We stepped out and bought the paper and found that it really was Sunday! I never felt so completely lost in my life! Of course we had forgotten to count out the time we had spent in Blois with Mrs. Shurtleff, but it gave us quite a start, I can tell you, particularly as Marje was so anxious to get home. We did not let the grass grow under our feet the next day, believe me. We had luncheon at Chartres and gave about ten min-

utes to the cathedral. I drove from Chartres, and at Maintenon I stopped to take a picture of the château reflected in the lake. Marje wandered off for a few minutes to watch the old women in the market-place, and while I was standing there alone two officers came up to me and one of them said, "Are you English?" I said, "No, American." "Have you your papers, your permis de conduire?" I felt my knees give way, but I hung on to the bridge that I was standing on, and said smilingly, "Oui, Monsieur." "All right," he said hesitatingly, and passed on. Of course, it was only Marje that had her permis, and I don't know just what would have happened if they had pressed the matter further, for I did n't have a sign of a permis and they had seen me drive. Marje insists, however, that it would have been all right because she could have said that she was teaching me. I was pretty grateful, I can tell you, to have had one smile left just the same.

At Versailles we were surprised to find that we could buy still more gasoline. We could n't understand because there is never enough in Paris. We bought all that we could carry, however, and started for home. When we came to the cross-roads where it says: "Saint-Cloud, 11 K.M. and Sèvres 6 K.M.," we decided to take the road

to Sèvres, although people had always warned us not to. We soon found out why. The road is hilly and covered with cobblestones the entire way; but we really did n't care, when we caught sight of the Eiffel Tower. At the gate of Paris there was an armed soldier standing in a sentry box, and as we slowed down to go through the gate I leaned out and said, "Bon jour, Monsieur."

Once in Paris we found that we were completely lost, having brought everything with us but a map of Paris. It was too provoking, but here my refugee knowledge did me good service, and I picked my way in and out among the slums and found the way straight to our Lion de Belfort. We had enough energy left to start unpacking that dear little car that was stuffed full to the roof. The people at the pension were all excitement, and the maids ran up and down stairs helping us with our things. We went over at once to Mrs. Shurtleff. We found her looking worn. We knew how anxious she must have been to know that we had arrived safely, so that you can imagine how we felt when we tiptoed into the room and found that she was so weak that all she could do was to turn her head on the pillow and say, "Hello, girls!" We found that she had fainted twice coming up on the train,

but that Miss Curtis had taken care of her at the station.

After seeing Mrs. Shurtleff, we took the car to Miss Curtis's because we knew no place to leave it overnight. We did not feel much like a triumphal entry, but Miss Curtis and Miss Sturgis were so glad to see us that all we had to do was to answer questions and get back to Place Denfert as soon as possible.

Well, that is our trip. It certainly was interesting and it laid the foundations of my friendship with Marje, who is the finest ever. It is worth everything to me to have her companionship.

Time is up. Devotedly,

ESTHER.

XII

FROM MARJORIE

12 *Place Denfert-Rochereau, Paris.*
(*March* 26, 1917.)

My dearest Daddy: —

Writing nowadays is rather like the shooting the men do at the front; they never can see if their shots get there. I am never sure if my letters get to you, there has been so much trouble with the mails. The head man at Morgan, Harjes told Dr. G. the other day that they had just received a great deal of mail — the first for a long time — which was all *wet*. The papers were ruined, but the letters had fared better as a whole. I wonder what that meant?

As you probably know by the papers, we had a Zeppelin raid or alarm last week. It was very exciting. I have never heard such a noise as the "gare à vous" trumpets or horns — or whatever they are — make. Esther Root and I stood out on our balcony for a long time watching the aeroplanes overhead. They had searchlights and made a beautiful effect. The Zeppelin was,

of course, brought down way outside Paris. They never get here, because the air guard is so very efficient; also they have to go right over the army and are always discovered. However, I can now say that I have been in Paris during a "near-raid," at least! This almost makes up to me for the disappointment of not having had one during my interminably long stay in London.

I have one very serious confession to make to you. I have been religiously keeping accounts ever since I left New York, first in dollars on the ship, then in pounds, shillings, and pence while in London, and then shifted to francs when I got here. You have no idea what a gorgeous account-book it was, or still is, but — here is the tragedy — I lost the dear book last week, somewhere in the metro. There is only one chance in hundreds that I will find it again. I don't know just what I can do about it. I can't possibly remember what I spent, but I will make a rough account which will give you some idea.

This room which I have now is only ten francs a day, and is much nicer. It has splendid hot running water in the closet, a nice balcony, and the food is delicious. Mme. H—— is very nice, and so are the other boarders. Some queer ones, too, — two sisters from Poland who tell us

stories that make our hair curl! Also a Mlle. Germain, who is studying to be a doctor, and tells us, *at meal-time*, about the latest corpses from the Morgue she has cut up! It is wonderful to me the way the French don't mind what they say at table.

I am wondering if I shall do all the queer things that I am now doing, when I get home. I take my fork and knife off my plate every course and lay them on the tablecloth. I "swab" (it's the only word) my plate with a piece of bread, to get all the gravy. I eat bread by the yard (literally), while I never touch it at home. You would laugh to hear what we have for meals, and yet they are delicious, — mostly vegetables, a little meat, very well done, and with delicious sauce, and never anything but cheese and confitures for dessert. Although the tea-shops are all open, you can notice a slight difference in their cakes. They no longer have frosting in the real sense of the word, but are covered with cream or paste or powdered sugar. The fillings are not as sweet as they once were, but they are still delicious. Do you suppose I will want white wine with luncheon and red with dinner, when I get back? I can't get along without it over here. It is so funny when you once begin to think it over. It does make me

tired when I hear people say that living in Paris in war-time "is *very* different," and then heave a sigh. Of course, I don't know what it is like here in peace-times, but I do know that we are all *very* comfortable. We all have luxuries, and there are wonderfully few restrictions, I think. You should hear Mr. Ayrault — who has just come back from a four months' tour of inspection of prison camps in Germany — talk. He says we don't know what war means here, compared with Germany, where everything is distributed by cards, — everything except goose, and that, as a result, is prohibitively high. He is most interesting in his accounts of Germany. I wish I could write you all, but I don't suppose Mr. Censor would approve. By the bye, of all my letters from America, only one from C. Morss has ever been opened.

In one of your letters you spoke of fighting the "White Rats." I don't care much for the idea. Don't, for goodness' sake, get stabbed in the back or poisoned by a lot of bum vaudeville artists! I speak of stabbing and such. If you hear of a young American being killed by a bicycle over here, you may be sure that it is I, and it will be such an ignominious death. A taxicab I could bear, but I seem fated to be killed by a bicycle. They don't use horns here,

and just go whizzing by. I have *just* avoided two already.

Spring seems to be trying hard to get here, — not too successful so far in its attempts, but there is some green grass in the gardens, and on Sundays the Punch and Judys and merry-go-rounds are open on the Champs Élysées.

I know I am getting cross-eyed, and walking up and down the Champs Élysées is doing it. There are so many interesting people, so many uniforms, that it is horrible. I try to look both ways at once. Then tea. I have been to Rumpelmeyer's several times. It is very popular here, although in London no one would go to Rumpelmeyer's, for it was considered too "Boche." I am afraid the French love their cakes too much! Such people as you see there, regular "coo-coos," you would say. It is very amusing to sit in a corner, and watch and listen, and, of course, the food — to say nothing of the joy of having ice cream — is to be considered.

I have been going over several other Vestiaires lately, and I am becoming more and more convinced that Mrs. Shurtleff's is among the best organized institutions of its kind. Naturally some of the Government things are much more complicated and wonderful. I can't help asking

myself more and more what France would have done and would do without the assistance she receives from America.

Your very loving daughter,

MARJE.

XIII

FROM MARJORIE

12 *Place Denfert-Rochereau, Paris.*
(*April 5*, 1917.)

DEAREST MOTHER: —

Having gotten rather tired out the last few weeks, and having had several bad headaches, I decided to take a few days' rest now, — for I have at last finished the card catalogue, — before I start out on my new duties, which are to be many and various. So here I am in bed with the machine on my lap, having a good time, writing to you. Things have sort of piled in on us at the work lately. It seems to me so very important that none of the workers should fail now, so that is why I am taking these few days to get my breath before going on. Mrs. Shurtleff has at last come in from Neuilly with Gertrude, who seems to be doing remarkably well. I can tell you that we are glad to have Mrs. S. home again. I am particularly so, for I have had to go out for her and take her back every afternoon, and as she wanted to be here for the work as near nine o'clock in the mornings

as possible, and the garage, or remise, is some distance from here, I have had to make pretty early starts. I found to my surprise that I was leaving this house at eight o'clock, and, after a struggle with the car to start it, — for it has no starter and we have to grind it, — I would beat it out to Neuilly, which, being outside the gate, is an awful nuisance. You are stopped going and coming, and have to get a red slip saying how much gas you have in the tank, and you have to be very careful, for if they do measure how much you have and find that you said either too much or too little, they are very strict, and there is a heavy fine.

If, for any reason, I should die suddenly just now, and you had my brain dissected, you would find, I am sure, that at least one half was a mass of figures, which, if you studied, you would find was the result of my constant reducing gallons to litres, and miles to kilometres, and my endeavoring to figure out without measuring in the tank, how much essence remains. Also you would find "essence," where to get it, how much to pay for it, — "shall we stop here and buy some, or chance it till we get home?" written all over my gray matter. I am at present entirely responsible for the car, and, delightful as that should sound to you, it is a privilege not

Esther and Marjorie

entirely free from care. The question of getting gasoline alone, in these days, is hard enough. Then I have to keep an account of just what the car costs per day, and also to keep it in good shape, for it is impossible to get mechanics these times. They are all under the Government. We have for the car (which, by the bye, we named "Nilly," for the other car being "Willy," and this one having come over as I told you without anything — absolutely NIL) a small hole in the wall off a peculiar alleyway, which is known over here as a "remise." It is just big enough to get into, and is fairly difficult to navigate, for it faces a cement wall, and one has to back in and turn just so, or else hit the wall. But at the rate Rootie is going now, there will not be much wall left to trouble us soon!

I have enjoyed the rides out and back with Mrs. Shurtleff ever so much in one way, for it gives me a chance to have her all to myself, and that is something that few people can have with Mrs. Shurtleff. We have had some bully talks. One day I went in to the hospital, — which is the American Hospital, by the way, not connected with the American Ambulance out there, but a hospital for Americans sick over here, and is a model in many ways. I went all over it, and, incidentally, met Mrs. Robert W. Service, the

wife of the man who wrote those poems about Western life, very much in Kipling's style. Daddy has them. "The Cremation of Sam Magee" is one of the best. He has just published "Rhymes of a Red Cross Man," — war poems, needless to say. Well, Mrs. Service was at the hospital, with two kids, twins, eight weeks old, dear little things. She herself was very sweet and rather pathetic, I thought, trying to do everything in the American way, although she is really a French woman. I was impressed with the hospital and the nurses, and it gave me a nice, secure feeling that, if I was ever sick, I could be so in the good American way, even way over here.

I have been out with Agathe, the maid at the Vestiaire, almost every afternoon, sending off packages, and then later returning Mrs. S. to Neuilly. She stayed out there all the time with Gertrude, sleeping in a horrid little hotel where there was no heating, but she got comfort from being with Gertrude in the afternoons and evenings. By the time I got the office work done, and did some chores and extra leaving and calling for bundles, I found that it was after seven before I put the car finally to bed, covered up and locked up, with the precious bidons of essence standing in tidy rows behind the car.

Then letter-writing in the evenings, and making reports, extra typing for Mrs. Newson, and all the hundred and one things that come up every day, reading and listening to Rootie play, — which she does so very wonderfully, — this was getting to be too long a day, so I have cut it out. Monday was my last day to go for Mrs. S., as she brought Gertrude in yesterday. Just think, only eight days from the operation. I hope that they are not going to let her do too much, but I do not believe that they will.

Yesterday I was a little tired, anyway, and had a headache, and I was told to take a Mrs. Jackson, one of the workers, off for all day in the car, calling, as usual. I had no idea where I was going, or what I was going to do, but I was given the address and told that it was an all-day job — lunching with Mrs. J. too. I adore Mrs. J., she is such a sport, and, like all the rest of the people over here, has been so good to me. I got lost on the way to her house. I never saw such an elusive street. I swear it moved on the map, while I was watching out for taxis. You have no idea what sport it is trying to find one's way about Paris with a map in one hand and driving with the other. Fortunately, my sense of direction is fairly good, and after a time I arrived on the street — going in the wrong direction, of

course. If any one can tell me the French system of numbering their streets, I would be obliged.

I used to think that Boston streets were mixey, because they changed names once in a while, and Summer Street becomes Winter after it crosses Washington, for some reason best known to itself. In Paris, a street is one thing on one side of a lamp-post, and then suddenly adopts the name of the nearest square on the other side of the post. The odd and even numbers of a street run entirely differently on the two sides of the street, so that when looking for forty and you see thirty-seven, you *think* that forty is apt to be fairly near on the opposite side of the street, but no, no, it is a couple of blocks ahead or past, for the numbers do not run evenly, and twelve faces thirty-seven! Of course, all the numbers are put up good and high, so that they won't be stolen, I suppose, and also so that when you want to see them, and are walking, you can turn your face skywards and, walking ahead, fall off the sidewalk and amuse the children! Also in the car, with this body, one has to lean out the side and crane, and I can tell you my swanlike neck comes in handy, to say nothing of my eyes, for the ingenuity shown by whoever hides the numbers on the houses — just behind a blind or

beneath a scroll, or to right or left or beside the doorway — is wonderful!

As I started to say, before I got off on this feeling dissertation on the Parisian street names and numbers, I was late to Mrs. Jackson, and found her waiting and eager to be off, for there was lots to be done. As I knew that there was not any too much gas in the tank, I emptied one of my extra bidons in (I always carry two extra ones; each holds five litres of gas, makes about five gallons in all). I said as I did so that it smelled like bum gas, and then thought no more about it. We started cheerfully, and got about three blocks, on a nice muddy asphalt street, and she died, quietly, but very dead, indeed. I got out and cranked for a time, but soon knew that there was trouble deeper than mere cranking would remove. So off came my hat and coat, and I rolled my sleeves up and went to it. I found the spark seemed all right, and by a process of elimination found out that just what I dreaded from the first was wrong — the carburetor. By this time the sidewalk crowd had grown considerably, for the sight of an American girl, hatless, sleeves rolled up, hair flying, bobbing under the car and into the hood, was not missed by *many* residents of that district, I can tell you. A very nice gentleman pushed his way

through the gaping crowd, which was getting as near and as much in the way as possible, except when I turned every few minutes and froze the half-dozen most forward with a glance calculated to freeze, and which I wished could kill, for anything that gets me peeved is an audience, particularly a French one. The nice American said that he "knew nothing about a car," but "could he help?" He could. I dispatched him for help from the nearest garage so quick that he could n't change his mind. By the time he returned, I had the feed-pipe of the carburetor all off (I know that these names mean nothing to you, but they will to Daddy), and the two mechanics which he had found would not, of course, believe a simple woman — and I guess that I looked more simple than I felt even by this time, for they had thoughtfully begun to clean the streets while I was exploring under the car, and I was not only muddy but wet.

After a heated discussion in Anglo-French, the men believed me, and stopped cranking, and, on turning the pipe down to let the gas run out, we were delighted to see pure aqua pura run out — not gas at all! Now, don't you call that the limit? The last bidon of gas which I had put in was n't gas at all — it was water, pure and simple. Of course, we had to wash out the tank,

waste quarts of essence, which is more precious than gold these days, and then clean out the feed-pipe and carburetor. You never saw such a job, and all performed on the street! All told, that little drink of water which I gave the Ford cost about one and a half hours of time, and about sixteen francs in money.

We got under way again, but it was so late that nice Mrs. Jackson had to rearrange all her plans. However, we got a great deal done, and, incidentally, I had a wonderful day being with her. We lunched at a queer little restaurant over in Montmartre — had hors d'œuvres, cheese omelette, lots of very good bread (at least, as bread goes these days; how I shall enjoy some toast made out of white bread!), and cream cheese and apple sauce, with coffee which was the real article — not chicory or burnt almonds, or whatever it is that they give you at half the places. We talked about everything under heaven and earth, and I came away from luncheon more than ever convinced that she is a wonder. She asked me to go South with her the 22d of this month, but I am not going to. First place, the work needs me, and second place, I do not want to take my vacation until this summer, and then take it all in one big lump, doing something worth while. I am

awfully complimented that she asked me, anyway.

I went back to her house for tea after we did some more calls in the afternoon, and had another nice talk with her in front of her fire, in the nicest apartment — all etchings in her study and such dainty nice things. I can tell you it is pretty nice to have tea from a silver service once in a while, only it makes me sort of homesick for the library and Josey to scrap with over the remaining piece of cake. I suppose that she will be so grown up when I get back that I will not be able to henpeck her any more at all. I think from her letters that she and I are going to understand each other much better when we get together again, and that we will pull together, not apart. I wish that I could possibly tell her how much her letters have pleased me, for I know very well what a nuisance it is to write me, and she has been so faithful. After tea with Mrs. Jackson, I went over to see Ibb, who has been resting off for a few days, and found her better. Then I toddled the old Ford home, and, when I arrived here, went to bed myself. I found I was a good deal more tired than I realized at the time, so yesterday I just lay abed all day, and am doing the same thing to-day. As a result, I feel like a fighting cock this afternoon, and am

going to do some work here at home to-morrow, for Mrs. S. wants me to go easy and not go to the Vestiaire until Monday or Tuesday, for Monday is a holiday. Mme. H—— is too good to me; she has had all sorts of special nice things cooked for me, keeps the fire going in my room all day, and with that and the sunshine, and every one being so good to me, I feel like a different person already. Esther is a very fussy nurse, and won't let me turn over for myself if she can do it for me; and to-day Mrs. Jackson, dear, busy soul, came in to see me. I could n't get over it. It is too wonderful the way people are so good to me here: Mrs. Shurtleff, Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Christie, Dr. and Mrs. Lines, and I don't know how many others. I just love them all, and am altogether too lucky for words.

Every one seems to have a different idea as to what the effect of our entering the war will be. I hope that you will approve of my helping by driving, if they call for volunteers for the American Ambulance, for I would like to do it very much, and think that I am up to it. I naturally will cable you before I do anything definite, and will consider it very seriously before I leave Mrs. Shurtleff, as Daddy told me to. If, however, America needs any help which it is within my very limited power to give, I could not be happy,

feeling that I was working for the French only. This is, of course, all "IF"!

I have been saving the papers lately, for they are interesting, and I thought that we would have a good time comparing them with the American papers when I get home — seeing what they have let us know over here and what they tell you over there about us here. I wonder which place is really the most interesting.

Of course, all the mail is coming in the most peculiar order, yours of February 28th arriving in the most dilapidated, water-soaked, almost illegible condition, long after yours of March 2d, which came before yours of March 11th. I never knew such wonderful letters as you and Daddy write to me. I simply read and re-read them by the hour. Thank goodness, you feel that I am telling you just what you want to know. You have no idea how hard it is to write, for there are so many things to say that one longs to be a Bernard Shaw and be able to say them all, and not be just plain Marjorie Crocker, who can only ramble on without any rhyme or reason, as she talks!

For goodness' sake, take my letters in doses, not all at once. I know that it *is* awful to rant on as long as I do, but I have so much to say, I simply cannot stop. That is why I only write once a

week or so, because I had so much rather take a long time to it, when I get started, than to write a lot of hasty notes. Well, this is over now. I am going into Rootie's room to listen to her play. She is so wonderful. She just takes care of me, and to-night, to finish off a wonderful day, Mrs. Shurtleff has just been in and was too nice. I adore that lady more every time I see her. We all do, and that is, of course, the secret of the success of her work here! We all adore her so. She made me promise that I would not come back to the work until I felt really like it, and my headache was all gone, and so forth. Then we planned out my work in the future, now that the catalogue is done, and it just sounds too good to be true — just enough visiting to keep in touch, and some office work and some automobiling, and calling with Rootie, which is, of course, a perfect lark. I am so happy to-night, so much more so than I have been, since I got Daddy's cable on Sunday. Well, lots and lots and lots of love to you all,

MARJE.

XIV

FROM ESTHER

Place Denfert-Rochereau, Paris XIV^e^,
April 8, 1917.

Dearest Aunt Esther: —

It is curious that gloom is so absolutely gloomy and that happiness is so happy and full. There are times when I cast about for something to write home about without finding anything — or rather nothing that is n't so black that it seems only selfishness to sit down and enlarge upon it. To-night, on the contrary, I have spent a most wonderful Easter, and looking backward and forward I can see a thousand things that I should love to tell you about. It can be only a few for the moment, for the electricity will be turned off in a few minutes.

This morning Marjorie, my new but very dear friend who lives here at the pension, woke me up and said that the sun was shining. It has rained and snowed without a break lately and the sunlight seemed a glorious novelty.

We had breakfast together, then went to the patriotic service at the American Church, where

Dr. Shurtleff preached. The long-waited-for news of our actually going to war had rejoiced us all yesterday, but it was more thrilling than we ever could have imagined to drive past the big French Administration Buildings and see the Stars and Stripes waving with the other Allies' flags in the Easter sunshine! To be one of the Allies at last! To have our flag and the French flag flying side by side as they should be, to have our great country wake up and fight its own fight — it is not only Easter but Thanksgiving to-day.

The American Church was full — men from the American Ambulance Service sat in uniform in the front rows and the church was decorated in flowers and flags. Dr. Shurtleff preached a fine sermon. He said that to lose life was to gain it, and that this war was fought that war should cease — that the world should know Christ's peace.

A lovely primrose plant was waiting for us here. After all, the cold and snow, flowers, especially the pink primrose, are heavenly. In the afternoon Mrs. Shurtleff came over to say that the pianist who was to play at Dr. Shurtleff's little Sunday evening meeting had been taken ill, and would I play. Fortunately I had given a short programme last Monday at the last meet-

ing of a woman's club, so that I was glad to be able to fill in.

I must tell you about last Monday. Not long ago I exchanged the little old upright that I have had all winter for a wonderful Pleyel (French make corresponding to Steinway). This piano seems to me to be the most wonderful instrument I ever heard, and I love it and pat it and dust it and play it, never tiring. It has saved my life these past weeks.

Knowing that I have been playing more of late, Mrs. Baldwin asked me to play for the woman's club that I spoke of. I could n't think of much to play, and of course I have no music with me, but I was glad to have something to make me practice, and I accepted.

The club meets every Monday afternoon to sew and knit garments for the war orphans — Mrs. Cassette, a dear lady who used to live in Chicago, is the president, and when it was time for me to play, she made the announcement, and proceeded to enlarge on the Root family in general and grandfather in particular. She spoke of his influence during the Civil War, and of his and Uncle Fred's help in establishing good music in Chicago. She spoke beautifully and gave me an at-home sort of feeling to think of her knowing my relatives; but it was hard for me when

she started speaking of me as the third generation, etc. After I had played I met a great many interesting people, among them the girl who wrote that little book of letters called "Mademoiselle Miss." Do you remember reading it with Mother at Bailey's last summer? The letters are full of imagination, and charming, as is Miss Dare herself. We went off in a corner together and talked over our experiences at a great rate.

To come back to Sunday evening. I played at the meeting the same programme as on Monday. To my surprise, Dr. Shurtleff also made a speech about grandfather, whom he knew in Chicago when he (Dr. Shurtleff) was a young man. Many people came up and spoke to me afterwards, and I found that lots of them knew the family in Chicago. Their enthusiasm was quite exciting and made me feel almost like writing war songs myself. Would n't it be wonderful to hear grandfather's "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp," sung in France!

Yesterday — Easter Monday — we all gave up our holiday to go to the Vestiaire and help to move our ouvroir department into a little store up the street. I have explained that the work is carried on in an apartment on the ground floor at 18 rue Ernest Cresson — one room is the

women's vestiaire, another, the men's vestiaire, a third Mrs. Shurtleff's office, and a fourth, the ouvroir, where sewing and all kinds of work is given out to the refugees. We have been crowded always, but of late it has been almost impossible to work in the front two rooms with so many people doing different things at once. People would keep running in and out of Mrs. Shurtleff's office while she was dictating, to look up records, or to get down reserve stock from the shelves; the officer of the day would have to interview refugees in a corner of the ouvroir, while lines of other refugees were waiting to call for, and hand in, work — the confusion was impossible. The two rooms together are not as big as the den at home.

Well, Mrs. Shurtleff, who goes around this world with her eyes open, I can tell you, discovered a little store that had been closed since the beginning of the war. It had been rented by a German. He was chased away in 1914, his windows broken, and the place roughly boarded up. Mrs. Shurtleff sought out the proprietor, rented it, and had it repaired. Saturday word came that we could move in. We have been so crazy to spread out a little that when some one suggested that all hands should report on Easter Monday, — one of the great holidays here, —

and get the moving actually done, we all volunteered. At nine o'clock we started. We took things down off shelves, stood in line and passed them through the window, where Miss Curtis received them and stuffed them into the Ford. When the poor little car was so laden down with clothes and materials and bundles that it looked as though it would burst a blood vessel, it started off and we all ran along beside it up to the new shop. There we formed another line, and unloaded the car and put the things on the waiting shelves.

There were tons of stuff — it was like moving R. H. Macy and Company, but I can't tell you what fun it was. Dr. Shurtleff and each one of our workers, who usually work at their own special jobs, pitched in to sort out bundles of clothes, or carry yards and yards of worsted, or do whatever turned up. Dr. Shurtleff started us singing "Tipperary" as we worked, and we had a splendid time and accomplished wonders.

This morning when work began, there were the two front rooms all neatly arranged, with plenty of space and everybody happy.

Well, I must close, but I shall have enough to tell you when I come home to outlast many a wood fire, and I am looking forward to the day

when we can sit down together and talk, with the clock faced toward the wall!

Much love to you always.

Your niece,

ESTHER.

XV

FROM MARJORIE

Sunday.

Dearest Family: —

Here I go again in one of these cahier affairs. It seems to be the best and only way to write you. I am this minute out at Saint-Germain — an hour outside of Paris. It is the place where Ibby Coolidge nurses. Her hospital is closed down now, so she is in at the "Invalides" for a few months. Although she lives in Paris, I don't see much of her, for she works from eight to eight, and is too tired to dine out after that. Rootie has been out here for ten days resting. The air is wonderful — so different from Paris, although so near. It has been getting warmer, and to-day we are sitting out under the trees writing. I can hardly believe it. If spring has only come, it will make *so* much difference. I have been working fairly hard these last two weeks, for Agathe, the maid, has been off on a vacation, and I have had to open the four vestiaires in the mornings — open the shutters, dust a little, arrange the chairs and such, build

the fires in the offices, and generally start things. This, combined with doing Rootie's work, — at least certain parts that could not be allowed to wait, — has made life fairly complicated. Mrs. Shurtleff is letting me have my Monday off this week, so I have two whole glorious days out here with Rootie. We do nothing but sleep, eat, and walk. We have sticks, and so feel very safe, and wander far into the woods. The youngest class is being trained out here, — at least, part of it, — and they come home from their lessons every night at about half-past six, — about five hundred of them, in every sort and description of uniform, all out of step, four abreast, except when they want to run ahead and speak to a friend a few rows in front; all singing "poilu" songs like regular soldiers. They are such a bright-faced crew, we love to go out to the terrace and watch them march to the center court, and there line up, be counted more or less — and mostly less — correctly, and then be dismissed. It makes you laugh to watch their antics as they march along. They all smile and salute us now, because we have been there so often. They are not fresh, — just amusing, — but it also makes me a little sad to think what they are training for — what is ahead of them. To think that these bright-faced boys will, in all probability,

Rootie in Park at Saint-Germain

Marje in the Salon at No. 12 Place Denfert-Rochereau

turn into some of the sad-faced, mutilated men that we see in the hospitals and on the streets. Although it sometimes disgusts you to have a réformé talk about getting so much for his arm, or lack of arm, or leg or eye, or so much more for a ball in his neck, — still I can hardly blame them. They have served their country when their country called them. They have given their health, and perhaps their happiness, to the country. Why should n't they be paid for it, and paid well?

If Rootie were writing this letter, she would tell you all the facts of historic interest about Saint-Germain, as she is well up in her Baedeker, but, as I am not, I will have to let you live in ignorance. I vaguely know that Henri IV was born in the pavillon here, and that François something started to build the château, got disgusted, and built Versailles instead. I can tell you, however, that the woods and park here are wonderful, that the church bell that rings every half-hour is most pleasing, and that there are many good restaurants here — one of which we are sampling this evening.

Daddy writes that my letter about the trip has not arrived. I guess it must have sunk, — is n't it just my luck? Well, I am going to send you the pictures we took, and I will write an-

other shorter and much less interesting account. I will type it and send a carbon copy a week after the original, and, if you don't get either, I give it up! I know I have missed some of your letters, but I have n't been much over two weeks without word, so I certainly must not complain.

Mrs. Willis, a friend of Rootie's, took over a few little things to you which I was anxious for you to have. She had no room, so I could not send several other things I wanted to. This letter and Eleanor's, a Mr. Whiting, a friend of mine, is taking for me. I hope that you will get them quicker than usual; — you ought to. I am also sending a couple of posters which I thought you might like for the bungalow in Marion. Tell Josey the little medal I sent her is a regular "croix de guerre," and the palm leaf on the ribbon is the highest "citation" one can have.

If you get a spare minute, read Helen Davenport Gibbons's "Red Rugs of Tarsus." It is Mrs. Gibbons's first book. In some ways it is more interesting to read, when you do not know her. She is, of course, Dr. Herbert Adams Gibbons's wife — the one Betty Colt is secretary to. Betty grows more and more attractive. I see quite a lot of her. She has tea every day in the studios after they stop work at half-past four.

I blow in pretty often, at about half-past five, and Betty, dear soul, brews me a fresh cup of tea. There are usually interesting people there. Mr. Ayrault drops in often, also Mr. Griffiths, although the latter has broken my great heart by announcing that he has got to work so hard from now until June, he does not expect to take any time off.

Paris has seemed to me a little more sober these last weeks. Ever since America entered the war, the enthusiasm has been mostly American, as far as I can see. The French do not seem too hopeful as to the difference it will make. Mr. Ayrault says that if Germany can hold out through August, or until the next crops, — Heaven help the Allies. He says that the German markets are pathetic now; that they are almost empty; that the poor people are actually hungry, and not from high prices, but because there is n't any food to be bought. He himself would have been hungry if he had n't had outside help. The embassy gets eggs and butter and some meat from Norway, and also from Switzerland. Mr. A. also said that the discipline is so good there, and law and order so much the ordinary run of things, that the people are not likely to revolt. He feels that it is only possible to finish the war soon if the United States can

build enough ships quickly to supply England, which, from all accounts, needs food. There are, after all, only a limited number of submarines, and each carries only seven or eight torpedoes, I believe. They do not get a ship every time that they fire, so that, if the United States can build enough ships, losing a hundred or more will not matter in the long run. Mr. Simons, of the American Embassy here, — I mean consulate, — tells me that no grain ship has come to Paris for fifteen days. That is why the new regulation about the cakes and pastries has gone through so suddenly. I personally am glad, for it does not seem quite right for us to be eating so many foolish, unnecessary things if flour is scarce. I suppose the shopkeepers will manage to get around the law somewhat, but it seems to be a step in the right direction.

Harold Willis writes us the most thrilling accounts of the doings of the aviators now. He sent us some of the cards, printed in German by the French Government, which he and his fellow "flyers" drop by the thousands while flying over German territory. The cards say that the United States has joined the war, and recommend that the people surrender, as they will be well fed and taken care of. They are not very dignified, I think, and it is an amusing campaign,

is it not? But in some ways I would rather have them drop cards than bombs on the villages, had n't you?

It will seem queer to get home to Boston some day and go into street cars and public buildings, and not read on all sides such notices as "Taisez-vous, méfiez-vous, les oreilles ennemies vous écoutent." Also, "Versez votre or pour le Gouvernement."

Sunday, while we were wandering through the woods, we came upon a beautiful big tree, — a fairy oak, — all decorated with flags and flowers and prayers for victory. It stood in the middle of a clear space — benches around it. It was touching to see every passer-by take a few flowers from the bunch they were carrying home and lay them devoutly at the foot of the tree, praying as they did so. All the flags were weather-beaten except the latest addition, the American, which looked bright and hopeful in contrast to the others. I have never seen a tree like this. Mark Twain tells of the one at Arc in his "Life of Joan of Arc."

The terrace at night is in some ways more beautiful than in the daytime. One can see the various searchlights playing in all directions. They are really wonderful, — first one and then another combs the sky, as it were, looking for

hostile aircraft, which, by the bye, never get here.

The work continues to grow. Mrs. Sturgis is leaving us this next week, unfortunately, and we are all dividing up her duties. Work in the Food Department comes to me. I am both glad and scared. It will be interesting handing out the food and keeping the shop shelves supplied; but it requires lots of judgment to talk with the women each week, and decide when to stop giving them food, and to try to advise them on all sorts of questions. However, I am going to make a try at it. I think it is pretty nice of Mrs. Shurtleff to ask me to do it.

I ran across a new thing the other day: one of the families we were calling on showed us their linen, — sheets and underclothes, — which were completely yellowed and *rotted* by the asphyxiating gases! They fell to pieces when touched. Another result of this new kind of warfare. Sometimes when I see so many children sick and diseased through the results of their privations while under the German rule, I can't help wondering what the coming generation will be like when they grow up. They have had such hideous childhood. Gas-mask drills at school, lack of food, no homes for many of them, and goodness knows no future.

Rootie and I are thinking of writing to the Mayor at Rheims to find out who it is that counts the number of shells falling in that town daily! It must be a splendid job, and the person who has it is delightfully accurate. Every day we see by the paper just how many thousand have fallen, except once, when they "fell so fast" it was impossible to keep count. How awful it is to make fun of it, and yet one has to make fun of something about this terrible, terrible war.

Betty Potter has given me my *wonderful* package. When I saw the wrapper and Daddy's writing, and all the flags and ribbon, I just almost went to pieces, but Miss Whittier being with me, I could n't. I tore home, and did n't go in to luncheon, but sat and read and read and read. Oh, you dear, dear people, how did you ever think of doing such a wonderful thing? It pleased and thrilled me so that I am still walking on air. And the money. Oh, we do need it so, particularly just now! I shall write every one slowly, as I get time, but will you just tell everybody what a *wonderful* time it gave me, and how I can't possibly express myself? All I can say is, thank you, thank you all, over and over again. It was pretty mighty good of you.

I had already spent eighteen francs of Dad-

dy's money on a hot-water bottle for a poor dear old lady refugee, who is dying of cancer. It is only a question of time. Her two daughters care for her now. We have installed them, and are trying to make the end easier for them all. I found on one of my visits that they used a heated plate to give her relief when she had attacks in the night. The hot-water bottle is a great help, and they are pathetically grateful. I shall write you as to just what we do with all the money. Oh, you don't know how much it means! The little pins have gone like lightning. It is so sweet to see the joy that they give the children. Incidentally the various "workers" have grabbed them also. Rootie is downtown this minute buying *bright* ribbons for the children. It will be too marvelous to have new ribbons to give them.

Mrs. Shurtleff is driving with Miss Curtis to the front, or rather the evacuated district, next week. She has an opportunity and is seizing it, you can be sure. If we get enough clothes from America these next few months and can afford it, we are going to establish a regular station, and deliver clothes per Ford every fifteen days, and I shall do the driving!!! To say that the idea thrills me barely describes it. Of course, she is taking Miss Curtis this time because she is older

and is the head worker, but next time she will take me. I can't tell you how I long to *hear* the guns and actually *see* some of the things that I have been hearing about for so long. It will be splendid.

The new jitney, having finally arrived, proves much more satisfactory than the old ambulance body. I will send you some pictures of it soon.

We live on our balcony now, for the spring has really come. We purchased a chaise-longue and cushions at nine dollars, and take turns lying out on it. The balcony is so small we can only have one. We are just at the height of the tree-tops, and now the leaves are out and the little garden in front of us in the Square has many Japanese apple trees. The air is lovely; with the moon at night, it is marvelous. We hate to go to bed at all.

I have got to stop now. Lots and lots of love to every one, and thank you again for the package of letters.

MARJE.

XVI

FROM MARJORIE

Sunday, May 13, 1917.

Dearest Family: —

Here I am out at Saint-Germain again, this time quite differently, though. Betty Colt and I planned several weeks ago to have a day in the country together; we have both been so busy that we have n't got round to it until to-day. We planned to take the 8.04 train out, but, owing to a thunder-shower at five this morning, — which caused me to rise and go out on the balcony to rescue our precious chaise-longue, getting soaked in the process, — and its looking so dismal and so like *permanent* rain, I went back to bed and slept until 8.15! So we did *not* take the 8.04, but the 10.04. It rained a little on the way out, but now, after a delicious and filling dinner, we are sitting in the garden, writing at one of those little green iron tables. For a nation that has such good taste in most things, I think it remarkable the lack of taste the French have in garden furniture! Betty having never been out here before, the first thing we did was to

go out to the Terrace. On the way, we passed a Ford standing by the roadside, which had a familiar air. The number also seemed like ours, — so I pulled out my license card (which I keep with me always, — I am so afraid of ever missing an opportunity to drive through not having papers), and found that it was our "other car," — in other words, the car Miss Curtis hires from Mrs. Gage and runs for the Association and for herself over Sundays. You see, your license over here is a complicated affair, and has, among other things, the numbers of the car or cars you drive. I am saving, by the bye, all the extra papers that I have had to possess since I left home. It will be fun going over them together when I get back. Being clever children, we decided that Miss Curtis must be near by, — if her car was here, — so we rambled around and found her, and also Mr. and Mrs. Bowditch and Mrs. Sturgis and Miss Sturgis, all lunching at the François I^er^. We went in and said "How do you do?" to them, warned them how expensive the place is, and, after leaving a few chocolates, we went on to the Bois. We get a marvelous variety of chocolates out here — pure chocolate all the way through, called disque d'or, on account of a little daub or touch of *real* gold on each one. Somewhat the same idea as that eau de

vie with beaten gold in it that we used to have sometimes.

I intend to stand Betty up this afternoon and get some good pictures of her to send you. She is such a dear. I hate to think of her leaving Paris in three weeks, but Dr. Gibbons goes to Houlgate for the summer, and, strange as it may seem, he takes his secretary "mit" him! One comfort is that she is going to Houlgate, which is on the ocean, and she has already asked me to spend a week-end with her. This means that I will get a *swim* — hurrah! My prospects of having a vacation this summer seem to diminish as the time goes on. Mrs. Shurtleff and Mrs. Newsom are going to take two months off, but with Mrs. Sturgis gone (she sails this Saturday with her mother and father), I guess that the workers who remain will simply take week-ends off, or perhaps a week. We are now planning a wonderful week-end party, starting for Houlgate early some Saturday morning — Rootie, Elizabeth Baldwin, Mr. Griffiths, Bryant, Simmons, Mayo, and myself — in an auto, arriving in the afternoon, and getting a swim, some tennis, some food, a peek at Deauville probably, playing with Betty, and all coming back either Sunday afternoon or Monday morning. Does n't that sound pretty nice? I have n't the slightest idea

"Bettina" at Saint-Germain

Le Cèdre at Saint-Germain

that we will ever really do this — but we plan it at our Friday night parties every week now. If we do go, Heaven knows what I expect to wear.

I am wondering just what I planned in my mind to wear this spring, when I left home. My faithful purple suit continues. It is, if possible, more faded than ever. Rootie has offered me every conceivable kind of a bribe to have it cleansed, and I *think* I may! I have bought a hat, round and black with feathers curling round the edge, which, with my black silk dress (which has turned from my only evening dress into my street dress), is my costume for teas! I have one new waist; otherwise I have nothing. To-morrow being my day off, I plan to shop. I must get some thinner stockings, these woolen ones are killing me by inches. You just try cranking a Ford car for hours at a time in woolen stockings! I have got to get up my courage and buy some white skirts, although I hate to — waists are bad enough. It is a bit disconcerting to be told that I wear a 46! Why, *why*, don't we all use the same system of measuring clothes, coal, essence, and lots of things? It would save so much trouble.

Rootie and I have at last realized our ambition, and have persuaded the lady who was in the big room next door to us to change with

Rootie — thereby giving us a salon. We use my room for a sleeping-room, and the big one for a regular salon. With Rootie's piano and my sofa and chairs, it is *very* nice-looking, and will be such a joy. We have not been able to ask the crowd to come back to our house after Friday night supper, for instance. Now we are going to play "pounce" and bridge and all sorts of things in our salon. The extra room divided between us costs me only one franc more, — namely, eleven francs instead of ten francs, — and I think that it is well worth while. Also Mrs. Shurtleff strongly recommended our doing it. Last night I was sitting at the table writing, — Rootie on the other side sewing, — and suddenly, for no reason whatsoever, my chair simply collapsed under me! I never had such a funny sensation. As Rootie said, one minute I was there and the next I was n't — I was under the table! I left so early this morning that I did not see Mme. H——, so Rootie has the fun of telling her about it! However, she will not mind, I am sure. She is very, very good to us. She keeps her table up very well, and that, with the good service and clean rooms, is pretty fine, I can tell you. For instance, we had creamed potatoes and cauliflower in a baking dish for the first course yesterday noon, followed by cold

asparagus with French dressing (second course), cold meat and noodles, and ended with the usual cream cheese and confiture.

Every time I have asparagus I can't help thinking of the wonderful green "asperge" you people are having. It is nearly all white over here, and although very nice, not nearly as good as ours from Marion — naturally.

Rumors of Russia making a separate peace are frequent here just now. Dr. Gibbons and many others feel that she is not to be reckoned with one way or the other any more. They blame the failure of the spring offensive partially on Russia's lack of support. The submarines are evidently not getting everything. We have received nine cases lately — the first in a long time. Mr. Barbour at the American Clearing House says that eleven hundred or more arrived in Paris this week. We are glad, for we need everything we can get just now. The typewriter paper, I am very much afraid, has not come through; still there is always hope. (Neither lot has arrived.)

Rheims seems to be suffering particularly just now. Every day a list of the houses ruined by shells or fire is posted downtown, and the poor refugees go and stand and read whether "theirs" is gone yet. It seems to be only a question of

time before it will be a *completely* destroyed city. All the soldiers and officers say that Verdun was bloody, but this last month's defensive is *twice* as severe. Both sides are evidently losing frightfully. In a great many ways I am glad that I am in Paris, and not London. I believe that we will be able to outlast the English in many ways — food and soldiers. Coal seems to be the greatest lack just now, and yet as a whole there seems to be enough. The new meat regulation amounts to very little. Few poor people ever ate meat at night, and those who want to simply buy enough in the morning.

I was at the Ritz the other day seeing Roxy Bowen that was, — now Mrs. W. Stephen Van Rensselaer, — and on her way to Rome with the Honorable Stephen. They came via the Spanish line, and I gathered that the voyage left much to be desired. Among the tales she told (most of which needed a little salt, I imagine), was one of an egg dropped in the corridor and not cleaned up during the whole trip! She was the only American aboard. Personally I think I should prefer the submarines and the French line. I started to say that everything seemed very normal at the Ritz, only we could not have cake with our tea, it being Tuesday. Of course, it was just my usual luck to be asked to tea at

the Ritz on a cakeless day! I have been told several times that more chocolates have been sold this last year than any time during the last *ten* years — think of it! Of course, a tremendous amount is sent to the front. It is a favorite thing to send, but even with that taken into consideration, it seems odd, does n't it?

Speaking of sending to the front, I have taken on a Serbian soldier as a partial filleul, on the condition that I don't have to write him. I send him monthly packages, but anonymously, — as Rootie said, "Regular Daddy-Long-Legs stuff"! I have seen so many foolish — and sometimes worse than that — letters from these filleuls to their marraines that I have been scared off. But I could n't bear to have him starve to death. His name not only is not Hippolyte, but is utterly unpronounceable — sneeze twice, cough, and end with "sky," and you are as near it as I ever have been!

Paris, Thursday.

What very deceptive things maps are, anyway. Do you remember the day we looked up Denfert-Rochereau on the map? We all hunted for it, and finally located it, surrounded with stations, morgue, catacombs, orphan asylums, and goodness knows what else. I wonder if you

have the same picture that I had of it before I arrived? As a matter of fact, I only discovered the station a few weeks ago — so you can see how well it is hidden. The other cheering institutions do not exist, as far as I can *see*, and I don't care to look them up. What does exist is a large square, with a big statue of the Lion of Belfort in the middle. He is our landmark, as it were, when we are coming home. From any direction, there he stands, or rather lies, and that means "home" in a certain sense to us. There is a perfectly lovely garden in front of our house, and another beside us — between our block and Mrs. Shurtleff's. Both gardens have Japanese apple trees or cherry trees, and at night, when we lie on our balcony, the scent is perfectly lovely. As we are only two flights up, we are just at the height of the tree-tops, so it is deliciously cool, and, except for the children in the park, one can hardly believe one is in the city. Having these two parks and a square beyond, you can imagine what very good air we get, and that makes such a difference here. Besides the æsthetic qualities, this house is located at the end of a taxi-stand, which we can see by standing on a chair on the balcony. As taxis are few and far between here these days, it is pretty cute for us to have our own stand!

You may notice that I am following your excellent advice and am numbering this letter No. *one*. Meant to begin last week, but forgot, so here goes. Heaven help me if I miss out and forget what was the last number I used! I am trying to get time to re-write the Bordeaux trip. My bad words are all worn out from thinking of that *beautiful* letter going to the fishes. I am so very glad that you called my attention to the lack of periods and capitals in my letters. I intend to go over this cahier very carefully! It pretty near scares me to death when I think of your showing my notes to any one, for they are usually written hurriedly, and I simply say what I think and feel without any regard to phrases or literary value; not that I could do anything in that line if I wanted to. Still, it does please me to feel that I have been able to tell you enough, and in such a way that it has interested you. After all, it is simply because everything is so vital here, and when one has something to say, it is usually easy to say it.

Almost every day now, big, new, beautiful, creamy-colored dirigibles sail over the city. They are so marvelous-looking, with the sun on them. I do not quite know what they are for, but they are lovely to look at.

Having been scared into believing that the

pastry-shops are really closing, Rootie and I bought lots of crackers, only to find them all flourishing to-day, and with no immediate prospects of closing! That is the way things go here. Lots of talk about shortage of this and that, and yet we all have everything.

The last few days a very large number of soldiers — a remarkable number in fact — have come home for "permission" — I cannot imagine why. An oldest son — one of three at the front — came home this morning while we were making a call. I hated to stay on and ask questions, when I knew how much the woman wanted to talk with her boy. When he came in, both the mother and father stopped talking, and simply stared at him. Then she said, "Well, I am glad to see you alive," and kissed him on each cheek. The man said nothing, but pounded him on the back. Then the woman turned to us and explained that he was the eldest, and asked him if he had news of his brother, wounded in a hospital near Arras. The simplicity of their greeting, the wonderful control of the woman, who is having a very hard time,— her husband is dying of T.B.; she has three sons at the front; her daughter of thirty is insane, the result of the bombardment; and she herself is not strong. I think that it is interesting to see how people

usually say commonplace things when they are greatly stirred.

Rootie has finished writing, and is now waiting for me to come in and play "halma." Did you ever? We have bought a board, and I expect to be licked all to pieces, but here goes.

Your very loving daughter,

MARJE.

Friday, A.M.

Am writing this while waiting in the car for Mrs. Shurtleff, who is in the American Clearing House, looking up lost cases — your paper among others. I feel pretty important lined up with all the military cars, and I backed into the place *perfectly*, which is great, for soldiers look down on girl drivers. Am hoping one of them will crank for me! Letters from you and Dad arrived for breakfast, all about seeing the Roots. Thanks so much for them.

M.

XVII

FROM ESTHER

Paris, Monday, May 28, 1917.

DEAREST MOTHER: —

I am so bursting full of the good time that we have had during the past two days that I am going to dash a line off to you — an inconsequential line — even when I know that what you want is a letter full of statistics and answers to questions. (Funny thing, I always think that I am the one who is wonderful about answering everything that you ask!) I will be good to-morrow.

To-night, I am tired and dusty, but miles and miles of white French roads bordered by forests, and meadows, and houses, and towns, and children, and horses, and castles, and flags, are going round in my head.

> "There ne'er were such thousands of leaves on a tree,
> Or of people in church or the park. . . ."

To-day is a holiday, being the day after Pentecost (Whit-Monday in England), and Marje and I decided to go off for two days somewhere in the country. Miss Curtis had

planned to move a family to-day in the Association car, — forgetting that Mrs. Shurtleff had promised us that we could go out in it, — so she handed us over her Ford touring-car, which was perfectly wonderful for us.

Yesterday morning we started off in dazzling sunshine with a clear blue sky overhead. We took the road to Fontainebleau, which is long and straight and bordered all the way — fifty kilometres — with great evergreen trees. We took our hats off and talked, and laughed, and sang, and whistled, and watched the countryside go flying by; the trees and fields were the most luscious green, and everywhere were huge patches of mustard, growing dense and brilliant yellow. Little towns, red-roofed, with a single church spire and a few pointed haystacks, would huddle to themselves far off on the horizon, and always we kept tearing along between the trees, leaving Paris and carking care behind.

We stopped for luncheon under a particularly splendid tree and laid out our store on the thick grass. Sardines, fresh bread, cheese, preserved plums, strawberries, olives stuffed with anchovies, Cailler's chocolate and orangeade. I never had anything taste so good, and no salt air any nearer than Havre to account for it. You can't imagine what fun we had. Finally

when we were replete, we lay down and looked up into the leaves and listened to the most heavenly birds.

We reached Fontainebleau at about two. The "New York Herald" had said something about its being American day at F. that Sunday, but we were n't prepared for such an exhibition of American flags as greeted us on all the houses and shops, and on the palais itself. We knew, however, that all this demonstration meant that the hotels were full, so we looked to getting a room for the night before seeing anything. Not a thing to be had. Thank fortune we were in a car and could go on to the next town.

There was a special invitation for all Americans to visit the Fontainebleau golf course, so we made tracks out in that direction, as the palais and grounds were overrun with permissionnaires and the usual holiday crowds.

Arrived at the gates of the golf club we were ashamed at first to go in. We were tired and dusty and blown to pieces, and the paths and hedges looked too neat and dressy for words. But we did hop out and walk up to a gentle-looking gray-bearded Frenchman with a black straw hat, and asked if we could go in. He said he was enchanté to have Americans come to the club, and took us himself up to the first tee. I

looked wistfully at the little piles of sand and thought of the many hours spent under an electric light between four walls of fish-net on Seventy-second Street, and longed for my driver.

We wandered up to some fir trees in the rough about halfway to the first green and flopped down on the ground. We were both pretty tired and did n't know where we could spend the night, or what, in fact, the next move would be. Marje said that she could n't go another step until she had a nap, and as we did n't know when we should see a bed, we crawled under the low branches of the fir tree, spread our coats over us, and went to sleep.

It was twenty minutes of four when we woke up. We jumped out of the bushes and so startled a man who was driving off that he sliced his shot and the ball went whizzing between our heads. It was surprising to see men caddies in battered French uniforms — probably réformés for tuberculosis — and also young husky girl caddies toting around armfuls of clubs. These were the only reminders of war, for on the veranda were Americans and French people in white tennis shoes and blazers playing bridge. You can't imagine the thrill of seeing good-looking people wearing clothes and jewelry, sitting around

and calling out "No trumps" — after what this winter has been in Paris.

My, but we felt good after our nap! We met our friend with the black hat and he took us inside the clubhouse. He showed us most especially the mural decorations — scenes in Fontainebleau — which were from his brush. One of the silver loving-cups in the glass case had "Compliments of Charles Crocker" on it, and Marje discovered that he is a relation of hers in Fitchburg.

We became very chummy with graybeard, and I mentioned in passing that we could n't find a place to stay. He gave us his card — M. Paul Tavernier — and said that he knew an old couple who had a lovely house which they rented furnished for the summer, beginning July 1st. Just now they rented rooms overnight and would serve the petit déjeuner. It was nice of him to recommend us, not knowing us at all, but he must have known we were nice, we looked so innocent and unattractive. It seems funny that over here when I'm traveling I spend my time trying to look utterly unattractive and I meet with dazzling success; but such a difference as it makes when choosing hats!

I have had a gnawing eagerness to see Moret. I believe it's where the Barnards used to live;

and Professor Churchill, head of the art department in Northampton, knew George Gray Barnard there, and used to mention the town and its environs in his lectures. The road leads through the forest, and I can imagine nothing lovelier than the acres of velvet green grass and giant green trees. You feel so tiny in between.

We hurried back to Fontainebleau and found 25 rue de l'Arbre Sec to be a plain-looking house on a narrow, cobbled side street. Our ring was answered by a nice-looking little woman, who became cordial when we mentioned M. Tavernier's name. She led us through the house, which was dark and finely furnished, and upstairs to a bedroom done in pink, with white furniture. The windows looked out on a court and a heavenly garden — undreamed of from the street.

Mme. Moreau, our hostess, — I call her hostess for she seemed just like it, — made up the bed in fresh linen, hemstitched and monogrammed, put fresh towels in our private adjoining bathroom, and puttered around us adorably. She said that she did n't serve any meals except breakfast, but would we like eggs with our coffee? We jumped for joy. I have n't had an egg for breakfast since I was in Pau.

We sauntered out for dinner at 7.30. We went

to the France et Angleterre, the chic-est hotel there, and ate on the Terrace with all the swells. A few of the very few members of Paris haute société that I know were there, and bowed quite informally over their pearls. I was becomingly gowned in my old brown felt hat, the coat of my winter suit, the little blue serge model, and a pair of men's shoes that I bought from the Vestiaire. No matter. We watched the officers and their lady friends and the Rolls Royces and Renaults and negotiated our asparagus with perfect nonchalance.

To bed in that wonderful room. The armoire was all lined with satin, and there was a plain gray velvet carpet, and canework let into the head and foot of the bed, and the bed was set in an alcove with a canopy. Oh, I tell you it was great; twelve francs, for the two of us.

And when we woke there were the eggs — and pain grillé. It was about the time when certain people that I know are usually on the way over to the Vestiaire, and we hugged ourselves and each other, I can tell you, to think that we were off in Fontainebleau in an elegant boudoir with trees whispering outside the window and boiled eggs before us.

We had luncheon in the forest. We decided to leave the palais and grounds until another day

when there would n't be such a crowd and the sun would not be so hot.

Moret is the cutest place ever. A cobbled main street, with little stores and tiny streets leading off of it, and old stone towers over the city gates. It is on the Loire, and we crossed the bridge and sat down in the long grass at the water's edge and looked back at the town through the trees; cunning little houses with window-boxes leaning out over the river, children and ducks playing in the water; and topping the town, the tower of the lovely old twelfth-century church.

We went up to the church, and really it is the most romantic, irregular, moth-eaten, ancient of days that you can imagine. The inside is lovely in outline and general construction, but here and there it has been whitewashed and generally renovated in a deplorable way. Some one evidently died — as Marje remarked — and left to the church three brilliant cut-glass chandeliers, which give the most bizarre effect, hanging in the main aisle. We wandered around all alone — not a person in the place, not even a priest or choir-boy was to be seen.

We started home and went to Barbizon for tea. That is another cute place. Lovely villas, and tablets outside saying what artist lived

there. There are several fine hotels. One was really very snappy, and we had tea there outdoors under a yellow-and-white striped awning. The country all about is lovely and just shrieks Millet. If it had n't turned cold suddenly I should have wanted to get out and sketch and let Marje work on the car awhile. She always can find something to do, and if there's nothing in sight for me to draw, I always can draw her doing it.

I have just been playing over the easier of the Symphonic Études — if there are such — and here I am writing away and it's bedtime. Think of how wonderful it was to have that car, and find that lovely place to stay, and to have each other to go with, and then to come home to our salon and my darling piano!

I am waiting impatiently for the letter telling me what I'm to do in Switzerland. I am afraid you are quite unnecessarily worried about me. There was a time when I was pretty ill and tired, but I am much better now. Mrs. Shurtleff has given both Marje and me every other Monday off. I have n't written to you yet about our salon, but it makes all the difference in the world to our health and happiness.

Good-bye for now. I will write you a sensible letter soon, full of information and untouched

by frivolity. I understand that one boat has skipped. I know I did n't get any mail. Heaven know when you'll get this.

Much love, Mother dear, from

ESTHER.

XVIII

FROM MARJORIE

June 20, 1917.

DEAREST FAMILY: —

Having written you a short bum letter last week, I am now going to try to make it up to you this week. I certainly have enough material, and if this cahier is not interesting, it is because I am writing very hurriedly, and not on account of lack of things to tell you.

Ever since I arrived here in Paris, I have longed more or less, and mostly more, to get up to the "front," and to see what this war has done to the country and villages, and what modern warfare is like, anyway. I have hoped that I might get an opportunity some time, but have only hoped. It never occurred to me that *I*, Marjorie Crocker, would ever really get there, but I have! I warn you right now that this trip has changed my point of view in several ways, and I only hope that I shall be able to tell you what I saw in such a way that you will feel as I felt. (I am, by the bye, making a carbon copy of

this letter, for I do not intend to have another "Bordeaux trip" letter experience.)

Mrs. Gage wrote to Miss Curtis some time ago, saying that she wanted to borrow her car for a few days' trip to the front, and would Miss C. be willing to drive it for her? You can imagine that Miss Curtis was willing. I happened to be there when she was reading the letter, and remarked at once that, if anything happened, not to forget that I could always go as a chauffeur too! Then I thought no more about it, until last Friday, the 8th, when Rootie blew in to luncheon, all agog about some Mrs. W—— who wanted Miss Curtis to drive her to the front the next day, and Miss C. was in the country for a few days' rest. As this sounded like a chance to me, I got busy, and with Rootie's help chased up the "chance" as quick as we could! Rootie, knowing how I felt, had suggested me in the morning as a substitute for Miss Curtis, but nothing very definite had been arranged. We tore around from Dr. Shurtleff's to the Vestiaire, and there by pure luck met Mrs. W—— and a Miss Upjohn, who was with her. After some discussions between Mrs. Shurtleff, Mrs. W. and M. X. C., as to whether I ought to try to go in Miss Curtis's place, for there was every possibility of her returning that night, Mrs.

W—— said that I was there on the scene, and she would like to try to take me in place of Miss Curtis, and we must go at once to get the name changed on the papers, — so we hopped into the Association car and beat it for the Agence de la Presse, which is the place to get papers to go to the front. I was at this stage of the game as ignorant as you are as to who Mrs. W—— was, and why she was going to the front, and what the whole game was. The only thing I could think of was that I was really going to the front. We got the papers changed easily, and I came back to the house all excitement, ready to start at six in the morning. You can imagine how I felt, for it did seem as if I was cutting Miss Curtis out of her opportunity. We stopped at Miss C.'s house to discuss things with her, and found to our delight a telegram saying that she had decided to stay over one day more, so I felt much better. Incidentally I knew that she and Mrs. Shurtleff were going up to the front later on, and that they were to stay for a week or more. After going to Mrs. Shurtleff's and talking it over with her, we came back here and found a note saying the start was postponed until three in the afternoon. This I was glad of, for it gave me time to get ready, and also to attend the usual Saturday morning conference.

Rootie and I lunched at the Bon Marché, in celebration of the event, although I felt rottenly about going and not being able to take her along too. I thought that the ladies seemed a little vague, so I took some food with me, as I can keep going indefinitely if I am fed, as you know. I went to the Hotel Regina, as directed, at the hour set, and there met the rest of the mob. The party was to go in two cars, one a high-powered landaulet, French make, and our Ford. Mrs. W—— was the head of our party. She is about to found a work over here, has got an office, and, when she gets money and a committee, is going to have a "large work" for the Pays Envahis, so she says. She is English, and has written at times, and her excuse for going on the trip was to write up the country, send it to America, and raise money there for her work which is about to be. Miss U. is a friend. Mrs. W. was the next. I made the fourth, and chauffeur of the party. The other car contained Mr. and Mrs. Will Irwin, of "Saturday Evening Post" fame, Mrs. Norman Hapgood, and Mme. Perrin, the official guide, and her sister, Mlle. Bazin (they are daughters of one Léon Bazin, a well-known French author), and a chauffeur who looked at me in scorn! We started at about half-past three, our orders being to follow as

closely as possible to the other car, and, if we lost them, to turn up at Compiègne, seventy-five kilometres distant, for dinner and to spend the night.

I am perfectly sure that the chauffeur never drove so fast in all his life before; he just whizzed out of Paris with us panting at his rear! Once out of the city, I balked and slowed down to a comfortable gait, which gave me a chance to listen to Mrs. W——'s flow of words in my ear, and enjoy the country. I could hardly believe at this stage of the game that I was really on my way to the front. We had two punctures, but, as I was carrying two extra rims, they did not bother much. Of course, the ladies thought I was "so clever" to be able to change a tire! I wonder what they expected — that I would stay by the side of the road all night with a puncture? We arrived at Compiègne at about 6.30, and found an excellent hotel. The arrangement of rooms amused me a little, for I found that they had reserved two chauffeurs' rooms! Although the other one is a most superior being, having driven Edward VII during his stay in Paris, still I thought I preferred the hotel to the garage to sleep in, and so made my own arrangements! King Edward, as we called him, was very nice, and mended my two punctures for

me, after taking me to the military field to get my gas for my trip. For once in my life, I had all the gas I wanted offered me, and did not have to pay for it! I can tell you, I took all that she would hold, and then filled five empty bidons which I had, fortunately, brought with me. We had a delightful dinner, and I for one turned in early, for I imagined that the next day would be a tiring one. The next morning was cloudy, but not rainy, and we started off at nine o'clock for Noyon, which is the headquarters for such trips as ours. We went via Bailly, where we saw our first trenches. Also No Man's Land, of Mary Roberts Rinehart fame: the first really famous battlefield. We stopped and walked through long communication trenches, now partially filled up, all muddy and full of cobwebs and dead rats. It seemed strange to think that only last March there was fighting in those trenches, and now they are cobwebbed and falling to pieces. The officers' dug-outs along the side of the roads, all of which have been first in French hands, then German, and now French, were particularly interesting. Each one was different; some had regular windows with pathetic attempts at curtains, some were quite palatial, others were filled with water, and all wore a deserted and much-fought-over air.

The miles and miles of barbed-wire entanglements, with corresponding miles of twisty-turny trenches, screens of boughs, wire with grass tied on it, and burlap curtains, showed us quite distinctly where the original French lines were and the Boche. The land in between is now quite dry, and does not look like a lake, but like an ordinary field, criss-crossed with low barbed-wire entanglements. Here and there a grave, mostly French. We walked along the roadway, and stopped to look at a ruined farm; the buildings of cement were all shattered, except the cellar of the main house, which had a painted sign over the door, "Notre Dame des Forêts," and then the hours of services. The interior had been whitewashed, and a rude altar built at the farther end. There were bullets, many of them, lying in front of the door. While we were looking around, an old man drove up with his wife in a rickety shay. He owned the place, and was coming for the first time to see what was left. I hated to have him get out and look. I knew his heart was breaking, and he was too old and already broken to ever be able to see it rebuilt. He was talkative, and took me out behind the barns to see his pride and joy: what once was a McCormick reaping machine, only just paid for at the outbreak of the war, — fifteen hundred

francs, — now a mass of twisted, rusted iron and steel, hopelessly wrecked. He did not say much, only told what it cost, said it was his only new machine, and then walked away. I went back to the car. What in the world could I say? The others had by this time walked on farther, and I had to hurry to catch them. We inspected more dug-outs, and then went on to Noyon.

Just before entering this town, we saw our first Boche prisoners. I don't know what a German soldier looks like ordinarily, but when shorn of his arms, buttons (taken as souvenirs), wearing a little gray cap with a red stripe around it on the top of his shorn head, he presents an amusing and pathetic appearance. I don't know what it is that is so very bedraggled about them, but they look so absurdly harmless, almost like the inhabitants of the Forest Hills insane asylum, when one sees them walking about the lawn or sitting under the trees on the way to Marion. They looked well fed and young. They were working, not very hard, but rather stolidly, I thought.

Noyon seemed to be fairly well preserved, and very full of military life. We went to Headquarters, and procured that most necessary of things for a trip to the front — a French capitaine. He was very nice-looking and agreeable, and, as

we discovered later on, very efficient. He let us look around the town a bit; in fact, I went into the cathedral for a minute, but as a service was going on, did not get much idea of what it was like. One thing caught my eye in the courtyard of the priest's house next door — a life-sized statue of some saint carrying a lamb. A shell had bitten a great piece out of the back of the figure, but he still held the lamb, unhurt.

From Noyon we were escorted south to a small town called Blérancourt, where the poilus come home for vacation, and a gayer place I never was in. Music, songs, soldiers dressed up playing tag, fencing, huge signs telling of a spree to come off that night in the big room at the canteen run by the English. We entered this building, and found three charming English women who are living there, and running a rest and writing-room and a canteen for the poilus. They serve about seven hundred a night, they said. They invited us to eat our luncheon in their garden, which we were most willing to do. I tried to get some pictures of it, but I doubt if any of mine will come out. It was pretty cloudy for photos.

I managed to get a chance to talk with one of these women, and she was so interesting. They are certainly doing a good thing, staying there.

Will Irwin in the Garden at Blérancourt

Mrs. Williams (back), Miss Dobson, and Mrs. Wethey in the Garden at Blérancourt

They live in the most simple way, sleeping outdoors in the garden, wearing khaki shirts and skirts. They are the only women in the town. Their life is gay in some ways. A French poilu on his four days' leave is more of a kid than anything I ever laid eyes on. One woman told me she did not know when they ever rested, for they kept up the noise and fun all day and all night too.

After a very nice luncheon, which we had brought with us, for one cannot get food in the military zone, we went on. We were aiming for Chauny, or, at least, we all hoped that we were, for Mr. Irwin told us that was as near the front as any women would be allowed to get. The country by this time was entirely ruined and very military-looking, — that is to say, all criss-crossed with trenches, entanglements, and dug-outs. We kept meeting high-powered cars going at a frightful speed, — mostly closed ones, — with officers in them. I can tell you that driving was no fun. I had to keep close to the other car which went at about thirty miles an hour, making a frightful amount of dust, but I did not dare slow down or lose sight of them, for I hate to think what would happen to a party of women found in the zone des armées, traveling about without the proper escort. I do not believe that any papers would be of the slightest use. As a

matter of fact, the papers were all made out wrong, and the one we did possess said that our party consisted of Mrs. Hapgood (in the other car), Mr. Williams (ditto), and Miss Upjohn and Mr. Pelletier, the chauffeur. How I was to pose as a man chauffeur I do not know.

We went along smoothly until we began meeting a great number of trucks, gun-carriages, and soldiers. This made me think that we must be near the actual fighting, and I was crazy to stop for a minute and listen for the guns, but I did not dare to. Then we met a very nice-looking chasseur on a bicycle, who held on to the side of the car and gave us all the information we wanted. First place, he told us that we were off the regular road for Chauny, and that we were almost at Pierrefond de Soucy, which town was *four kilometres* from the actual front! This thrilled us, as you may imagine. Then we were held up by a guard, who talked at great length with the first car, and after finally letting them go on, stopped us and said that we could not go for five minutes, that we must keep out of sight of the first car, never stop under any conditions until we passed the next sentinel, and that he had no business to let us go on this road at all, as the Germans could see us on an ordinary day, but it being foggy he would let us by!

For the first time I really felt as if there were some danger. As a matter of fact, it was practically nil, for the Germans are very methodical in their way of fighting, and do not fire on certain roads except at certain times. However, our chasseur friend told us that the woods we could see beyond the field on the right were French, but that the Germans were on the hill beyond. That made them seem pretty near. We just scurried through that town and the next. The road was very carefully screened on one side, with burlap and trees and wire covered with grass. There were some guns ready for action at the corners of the roads, and many signs saying that autos should not use this road except after dark. The woods were full of soldiers, who waved and shouted at us. I found that they all saluted our car, as they took it for granted that we must have an officer with us like the front car, so I began saluting back, and it seemed to please them terribly. By the end of the last day, I got so that I could give a very military salute without any trouble, which I consider quite a feat, for the driving was hard, — the speed and the bad roads combined with the very constant and real danger of the officers' cars which we met, and which, of course, would simply run through you if you did not give way.

The beautiful great shade trees which line either side of the roads have all been cut down by the Germans before their retreat. Also the fruit trees. In some places they did not evidently have the time to really cut down the trees, so they just ringed them — cut deep circles in them so that they will die. I noticed that in some of the villages the farmers had evidently tried to save these few remaining ones, and have bandaged them up. Mother probably knows whether there is any hope for them to pull through. The effect of miles and miles of flat roads with simply the stumps of what were once beautiful trees is ghastly, and I think of all the things that the Germans have done, perhaps this is the worst, and the thing which the people of that district will never forgive. They say it takes a tree thirty years to really bear, and the generation now living will never see their orchards bearing again.

In some places the Boches cut the trees so that they split when they fell (always across the roads, of course), and now there remain nothing but rows of great white, livid stumps which shine in the sunlight, and look so very ghastly, and make one realize even more that this modern warfare is not a *sport*. I took several pictures of the trees, but I do not imagine that I got the

Luncheon in the Garden at Blérancourt. Left to right: Mr. Irwin, nice French poilu gardener, Mrs. Wethey, Mrs. Hapgood, French officer who escorted us in *zone des armées*, Mlle. Bazin, Mrs. Williams

effect. It is, without doubt, one of the most impressive and oppressive things that one sees; every one who comes back says the same thing. From a military point of view, cutting the shade trees across the roads was not of great value and must have taken a great deal of time, and the apple and other fruit trees seems to be pure desire to destroy. Although one thing I noticed, the young fruit trees were almost always spared, and this fact carries out the German theory that they destroyed only trees which could be used for shelters for guns or men. The trees on the side of the road are without doubt invaluable in the making of screens to hide the road when under fire, but, even with all these facts in one's mind, and trying to be fair, one is infuriated to think that these trees, so many, many years old, should be sacrificed.

Once again one was impressed by the fact that a nation, or, I suppose one should say, two nations, who were keeping the whole world at bay, if not actually beating the whole world, could have time to do all the things with the attention to details which one finds in everything that the Germans touched. Take, for example, the fact that in the whole district which we covered — about thirty miles square surely — there is not a single bridge left. The present ones are every

one military ones, more or less temporary. That is a true and exact statement — not a single bridge. The same is true of telephone and telegraph poles — not one remains. Also there is not a stick of furniture of any sort, except things too big to be carted away, such as pulpits and big tables, which are hacked to pieces and are of no value now. There is not any furniture left in any house in any one of these villages. Germany must simply be full of French furniture! I can't think what they want it for, and what they plan to do with it, but, at any rate, they have taken it. In the houses they have blown up, if they have not removed it one could at least find the remains of it, — pieces of legs or something, — but there is no sign whatsoever, and I looked myself in many, many houses. How did they have the men and the time to do it all? Take also a little fact, but one so very characteristic of them. When an army takes possession of a village, one of the first things it does is to number all the houses and mark them on the outside as to how many horses, men, and officers they will hold. The French do this in paint in more or less neat figures on the side of the house, but the Germans chiseled the numbers in the majority of cases over the house door! A little thing, but taking time just the same.

I think that before I got off on that ramble I was telling you about arriving at Chauny. This town is pretty newly destroyed, and very completely so. It was evidently a manufacturing town, and the factories are now only a mass of twisted iron and steel. The rest of the village is literally ruined. I doubt if there is a house in the whole town that has two walls standing. We did not see it, if there is one. The *completeness* of the destruction is what impressed me. Nothing, nothing, left at all. It seems to me it will take generations to ever get that one town in shape again, and, of course, this is only one of many. As it is still under fire, we were scooted through, and were not allowed to get out, or take any pictures, for which I am sorry. From here we went via Guivry and Guisarde, two very much destroyed towns, to Champier, where we stopped and looked at a church which was ruined, and also saw for the first time graves which had been opened and emptied! This seems like a good story, I have no doubt. What in the world the German army wants with the contents of French graveyards I do not know, but I do know that they have opened and pillaged great numbers of the graves. At first it seemed to me that the sarcophagus might have been split open by the shock caused by the explosion of the church

and other near buildings, for there must be a jolly shock when a church falls down in pieces, but I saw many graveyards which were not in the churchyard and which were also desecrated. I was interested to see the depth of the older graves. They were all brick-lined, and surely eight feet deep. This destroying graves has also had a very infuriating effect on the people in the district, particularly as there are such awful stories afoot about the Germans using their dead for all sorts of horrible purposes.

Roye was the next town. Here the Germans played a sort of dreadful joke on the inhabitants. They have left the outsides of the houses in fairly good shape compared with the other villages, but have destroyed the interiors perhaps even more completely than ever. One house on the road into Roye looks as if a giant had cut it in two. The section which remains standing is partially furnished; for instance, in the third story there is à desk and chair, and a bust on a shelf against the wall! Think of that bust staying there through all the shock which must have resulted in the building being blown up. We saw several queer freak sights like that. Among other things which made one feel that the innocent, peaceful inhabitants of these villages are the ones who are bearing the greater part of the

Very Old and Beautiful House at Roye
Interior completely gone

The Cathedral at Soissons. Notice
only steel bars left in windows

war was a soldier home on permission, who had just got the key to his house from the Mairie, for they do not let people go into their houses until they have been inspected, as I told you that the Germans leave everything loaded. So this man went into his house and shop for the first time, and we all trailed in after him. The shop was once a good-sized store for ammunition and fishing-tackle, and that sort of stuff, — shelves running right up to the ceiling, with glass doors. Every one of the shelves was emptied on the floor and then exploded, every pane of glass was shattered in every door to every cupboard. This again is an exact statement. Now to take the goods off all those shelves, to smash every pane of glass, to burn and destroy everything that was not movable in that store, counters and such, must have taken time, and they did the same thing in every single store! Upstairs the same story — no furniture, walls mutilated, and windows gone. All metal things gone also, except lead, which they did not evidently care about. The French army gathers together the bits of gutter-pipes and lead plates which were on the roofs, and uses them again, but the Germans preferred brass and steel. The soldier did not say much. He told us, in grunts and shrugs mostly, that his wife and five children were lost,

evacuated, and he had not heard from them for a long time. He kept saying, "What is there for me to do?" And none of us could answer him. The officer told him that the township would have the store cleaned out for him, if he asked them to. They use the prisoners for this, and it must be very irritating to the Boches to have to clean up their own handiwork! Also they send them into the houses first to try and find any loaded bombs, placed thoughtfully in clocks, or under doors and such places.

After looking about the town some more, we came on to Suzoy, where we stopped again to see the Boche drawings in the Mairie. It seems that they used that building for their staff headquarters during their prolonged stay there, and so decorated the walls a bit after their own taste. They did this in many places, but in most of the towns the natives have been so infuriated by the drawings that they have already destroyed them, but this village has saved theirs and shows them to you with pride. I could not help thinking of the Cook's tourists who will be shown them later on, I suppose. The chief and most important one of these drawings covers the entire end wall of the big hall. The side walls have medallions of the various crowned heads of Europe, more or less terrible caricatures. The

big picture shows two fat naked German devils, with broad grins, and horns sticking out of their heads, and with long, pointed, forked tails, sitting in hell and watching and superintending the frying of the crowned heads of their enemies. The kings and presidents are all dangling on peacock feathers, trying not to slip into the fire, but all are sliding towards their doom. In the center, in the hottest part, — in fact, right in the flame, — are two figures, one, King George, I should imagine, and the other a neat little Highlander in his kilts. This is interesting in view of all the stories one hears about the Germans being more afraid of and hating the Scotch regiments more than any others, is it not? The pictures are well drawn, but are hideous, and you can imagine their effect on a French villager! There were also some excellent black-and-white charcoal sketches, which were really beautifully done, showing what happened in villages where the Germans were sniped at. A real artist must have done these last pictures. The most interesting thing in the village was a rough grave in the churchyard with a green board for a tombstone, bearing the following: —

"Ici a crevê
Le Boche
Qui a fait
Sauter l'Église.
18 Mars, 1917."

The story is that the officer, who ordered the destruction of the church just before their departure, was found half buried in the churchyard, the next morning (after the destruction), presumably killed by a French obus, but, to my way of thinking, more likely sniped by an irate villager. Anyway, the story is good, and the few remaining villagers like to tell it, and do it well.

All the time that I was on this trip I think the thing that gave me the sincerest sympathy with the people was the thought which was constantly in my mind: "Suppose this was Marion; suppose this was our house, our garden, etc."

Another rather amusing incident in Suzoy was an old lady, who appeared from somewhere, and insisted upon telling us her story. The thing that was uppermost in her mind, and the thing which she has personally against the Kaiser, — more than the destruction of her home, the total loss of possessions, the killing of one of her children by an obus, — all these are of slight consequence beside the awful fact that the German commander took with him when he left every solitary *key* in the whole village! "And how do you expect me to get along — this is too much, too much." If you know how the French love to lock up anything and everything, you can imagine what a tragedy this was!

Lassigny was the next village, and was in some ways the most totally destroyed one which we saw. There is nothing left at all. We went through it quickly, and returned to Noyon, where we left our officer with many thanks, and turned towards Compiègne, where we arrived at about 9 P.M., tired out, or, at any rate, I was dead. We had a good dinner, and I turned in very soon after. I had seen so many battlefields, so much destruction and so many novel sights, that I was afraid I would not sleep, but I did. Maybe the wine which we had at dinner made me sleep, but, anyway, I only came to at 7.30 the next A.M. I had some coffee and went down to find that the car was wet, and that the cap on the front wheel was cut open, and the grease running out. This meant something was wrong with the bearings, I knew, but, as Compiègne is about as convenient as the Desert of Sahara when it comes to getting hold of Ford parts, I decided to let well enough alone, and so tied it up with wire as best I could. King Edward showed a great longing to investigate, but I would not let him! As long as a Ford will run, let it run, is my motto — particularly when seventy-five kilometres from the nearest Maison Ford.

We all went at nine sharp to the famous Car-

rel Hospital, and were given an hour and a half lecture with colored slides of his system of irrigation. This was interesting, but I fear one member of the party felt that she would rather be out looking at things and battlefields than at slides of human beings, torn to pieces and then all nicely mended. After the talk, Dr. C. joined us, and took us through two wards. We watched some dressings which were gory and quite interesting. He assured us that he did not hurt the patient, but there was a difference of opinion on that subject, for the poilus yelled nobly most of the time. I talked with one man particularly. He attracted me, for he was so young-looking and was sitting up in bed with his leg on a pulley out in front of him, and in the most *detached* position I have ever seen. It did not seem to be part of him at all. He was reading a choice book called "La Douleur de l'Amour." I asked him if he did n't have a pain worse than love, and he allowed that he thought yes. He was a nice soul, and I am sending him some magazines to while away the time, for he will remain, even in this hospital where they are so quick, for several months. One nice old wizened-looking man said that he had been in five hospitals, had seven operations, and now was here with his right arm and left leg suspended. I

asked him how he stood it, and he said that he would stand anything rather than go back to the trenches again, and live in water for two months at a time. A queer choice? We came away at about half-past eleven, after having had a long talk with Dr. C., who said the same thing that I have heard from so many sides. I asked why, if his system of irrigation could so reduce amputation, mortality, and suffering, did n't the other French hospitals adopt it. He said that it was a new thing, and that they would not, because they are not used to the idea, and they prefer to keep on in the same old way, cutting off the limb if poisoning sets in, and so sending out a tremendous number of needlessly crippled men. How awful that does seem! I do hope that America is going to be sensible and profit by all the mistakes that the Allies have made so far.

From here we went in the direction of Soissons, and, much to our surprise, were able to persuade the guard at the outskirts of the town to let us enter, for women are not really meant to be admitted, as the city is still under fire. In some ways, this was the most interesting thing we saw. The cathedral was a wonderful and saddening sight. I would give a great deal to be able to attend a service in it some night. They are still holding them in the ruins, and, with the

sound of the guns, which is very distinct, and with all the uniforms, a service held in the ruined cathedral, with the windows all shattered, the roof mostly gone, and the outer walls all pitted and scarred, must be impressive. I could not get a good picture of the towers, or rather the one remaining one, but I shall have a copy of Sydney Fairbanks's, which is taken from a neighboring roof, and is excellent. They say that there is not a house in Soissons which has not been hit, and I can believe it. There are quite a few inhabitants left still, and they say they are going to stay until the last gasp.

We could only stay for a short time, for we were due for lunch at the American Escadrille, Flying Corps, which has its headquarters at Chaudon, south of Soissons. I had hoped that this would be the corps which I knew, but was not too sure, for the last time we had seen Harold Willis he was at Ham. However, you can imagine whether I was pleased to see, when we drove up to the camp, all the people whom I knew: Walter Lovell and Stephen Bigelow and Harold Willis. I, being the only thing this side of thirty in the party, naturally had a time! We had a swell luncheon, and afterwards saw everything there was to see. It is lucky for your peace of mind, Daddy, that they have

only single passenger machines now, for nothing would have stopped me if they could have taken me up. I never was so thrilled by anything — to see them fly in circles, and upside down, and every which way, was too wonderful. Harold told me all about the engine, and how to work it, and I even got inside his machine and tried the whole thing. I hate to say it, but I am going to have a fly some day before I die, and, if I have a rich husband, I shall have flying machines, not jewels, for my hobby. I saw the most wonderful pictures, and, oh, hundreds of things. They have two lion cubs for mascots, and the best-looking dogs you ever saw — one German sheep dog is so intelligent it is hard to believe that he can't speak. You simply tell him anything and he does it. He belongs to the captain. After spending as long a time there as we could, we came home via La Ferte Millon and Meaux, taking in the old battlefield of the Marne, and seeing Miss Aldrich's House on the Marne. It was hard to believe that this district was once as much fought over as that which we saw first — it is so grown up now. For one thing, they did not use barbed-wire entanglements half as much as they do now. I cannot get over the miles and miles and miles of fields we saw, all criss-crossed with wire. I keep won-

dering who is going to take it all up when the war is over.

We arrived in Paris at about eight o'clock, and it was a tired but thrilled Marje who came home to Rootie.

Lots and lots of love from your loving and very sleepy daughter,

MARJE.

XIX

FROM ESTHER

Wednesday, June 20, 1917. 11:15 P.M.

DEAREST FATHER: —

I don't know whether or not I have explained to you sufficiently about my vacation; but I do know that the work and life in general are going more smoothly now than for some time past, and that with the spring more or less broken into by one thing and another, I am only too glad to have a steady stretch in which to work without any more interruptions than necessary. I should n't know what to do with myself for two or three months' vacation, and the present arrangement, of having the month of August and every other Monday off, seems ideal to me.

For over a month we have doubled up, Marje and I, and are just twice as happy as we were. You will remember that the marginal space in which I lived and moved, always carefully, around my bed, was small to say the least (certainly Madame gave me bed and board!), and what was worse, it was in the other apartment from Marje. By a strange system of two keys

hung on each front door, passing across from one apartment to the other was made as difficult as possible. We called it going through the portcullis, having no idea what that meant. And next to Marje's room was the big salon of the apartment, thriftily converted by Madame into a bedroom and exclusively tenanted by the wife of a French officer. To her I made appeal one fine day — after hours of egging on and double-daring, etc. — that she exchange rooms with me. Here she was surrounded by gray paneling, a bay window, a carved marble mantelpiece, and easy access to the dining-room; whereas I had to offer her a room of no size, no sunlight, the pink wall-paper, red leather armchair, and chimney that won't draw. However, there must have been something in my manner, or even something in my smile, or in the fact that my room was two francs a day cheaper and had running water in the cabinet, that made her want to exchange. Also, the doors to the salon are broad and made of glass with only china silk curtains to protect one, and she felt — happily — that it was n't quite convenable for a chambre à coucher. Tuesday morning dawned. All the maids turned out in excitement. Madame was everywhere at once, particularly where a poor little sandy-haired tapissier was doing his best

to move a two-ton armoire; the whole idea was considered so bizarre — to have one room as bedroom, with two armoires at once — that the work of it all presented thrills. I never saw such dust and flurry, or such an accumulation of junk as I extracted from my former nest.

Slowly we settled. We would stand of an evening like newly-weds in the newly acquired dominion and plan our furnishings. Yellow and black was to be the color scheme, with my lamp-shade and piano as keynotes — two armchairs and a divan to be covered with something, and the traces of the era Minard (the officer's wife) to be eliminated. The lace tidies came off, the pictures of Calvary likewise, the strips of carpet put under the bed, and the statuettes and vases hidden. There was a washstand, a double-decker, and a Japanese screen to be disposed of somehow without Madame's guessing that we were n't wild about her furniture. It was days before we dared act. Marje did it. I should have told Madame that we were navrées not to have enough room to keep them and would they be safe in the cellar? but Marje — a diplomatic one — asked Madame if she thought it was quite comme il faut for two young girls to have a washstand in their salon? and with a "I should think not!" it was gone.

We looked at cretonnes — plain stripes; then wiggly stripes with roses and a conventional basket; then a formal design of children playing by a table; and on and on — always introducing yellow. Suddenly we saw our cretonne. A big gray pot of deep-rose peonies, with little white birds hovering over, and a little blue wistaria, all against a blue-and-gray lattice, with ultimate background of black. It is gorgeous. The design is twenty-seven inches high. We bought yards and yards — not to say metres and metres.

Then came upholstering. We worked with pins and warm language, and in five days had covered the divan, two armchairs, and six pillows. Marje did the pinning. I did the cutting. Then two long straight curtains beside the glass doors.

As for our yellow, my wonderful tea-set that I told you about, and some candlesticks painted yellow, and some bright yellow and black-and-tan striped pillows and the lampshade are the only yellow things. In the cretonne was only one pale lemon-colored flower; but I am slowly going round with my little brush and painting in the right yellow with water-colors. It 's wonderful, all of it.

Then we have a nest of tables of plain un-

varnished wood that I got for nineteen francs — four tables for less than four dollars — and we fight constantly as to whether they are to be painted cream or black. You can imagine how lovely my black leather writing-pad that you gave me looks on the table, and with Leo sunning in the bay window, why, Mme. de Sévigné need not apply; and I forgot a gorgeous blue hydrangea that Marje gave me for my birthday.

You can't imagine what a difference it makes to have a place to breathe in, and to play in, and to read the "New Republic" in, and to sew in, and to have afternoon tea in, etc. We feel so settled and permanent. Just wait until the war ends and you all come over to call!

I think we both feel a good deal better for the change. The Shurtleff car has been running fairly well lately.

I must tell you about my birthday — Marje wished me merry birthday the first thing in the morning, and then over at the Vestiaire Miss Curtis and Miss Sturgis presented me with a jar of real guava jelly. They had some left over from a steamer box when I first came, and remembered how fond I was of it. I was tremendously pleased to have any one think of my birthday, over here where everything is so different.

I went visiting all morning and took packages for prisoners, in the car, and sent them off. In the afternoon Marje and I did more visiting and hurried home for tea at five. Mrs. Shurtleff and Gertrude had tea with us and admired the salon, which had lately been fixed up, and then Miss Curtis blew in. She was going away the next day for two days to the country and wanted the Association car to go to the Ford place in her absence. She mentioned also some chairs and tables to be delivered up in Montmartre and a bed that had to go to Neuilly. It was after half-past five, — still later, I guess, — and she looked dead. So we offered to do it for her. She is always so wonderful to us. The car had the things all loaded on, but it 's always a job to go to Montmartre. The streets go straight uphill — so straight that they often end in a flight of steps, not marked on the map, and you have to back down and try another. Finally, we found the little back alley which was our first stop. The concierge's husband helped unload the table and chairs and he was obsequiously drunk. He was too polite for words, and after the furniture was installed he explained that he was no mover, but a marchand de vin, and would n't ces dames step in pour se refraichir. I could n't believe what he was saying, and Marje got hysterical over my tact (so-

called), and I wanted to start off quickly, but dignifiedly. The car would n't move. Crowds gathered. Suddenly I bethought myself of pushing the car — it was so very steep. But, of course, we were headed wrong, and you never can start the engine by pushing the car when you're going backwards. However, we decided to push until we came to a cross street and could then turn around. We did this amid cheers. Then Marje took off the brake and let her coast. Not a leaf stirring. She said the carburetor must be wrong, and that she needed priming. So I pulled out the primer, backing along the cobblestones as fast as I could while the car coasted; all women and children drawing hastily away at the sight of a girl apparently pulling a camion down the street with one finger. But she started that way, and off we went. One has to be habile quelquefois. I think that Santa Claus in the shape of a lady from America is bringing us a self-starter.

Then out to Neuilly with the bed. The poor little woman that we took it to was overjoyed, as she and her children had taken turns sleeping on the floor ever since theirs had gone from their home là-bas.

Finally to Maison Ford just outside of Paris. We left the car, walked back to the gates of Paris,

and started to go home in the Metro. We happened to notice that it was twenty minutes of eight and home three quarters of an hour away.

So we went to Premier's, one of my favorite places. Marje gave me the dinner of my life: lobster and real ice cream. I began talking about all my different birthdays, especially the one at college when I took my last exam and my ring came. I shall never forget that afternoon. Maidie and I had dinner at Rahar's, where we were forbidden to go without a chaperon, and she bet me the dinner that I would n't dare go up to the head of the philosophy department, whom we did n't know at all, but who was there, and ask him to chaperon us. Of course I did, and of course he was lovely, and came and sat with us a few minutes and said he hoped we'd take his courses some day when we grew up — and I a senior!

Then I told Marje about Bailey's and Stetson's and the ocean and everything. Gee! but we had a great time — I've almost stopped saying "Gee."

After dinner we found a horse cab in front of the restaurant and drove home. It was late twilight, and as we crossed the Concorde, we saw a tremendous big yellow full moon rising over Notre Dame. I nearly always stop when I'm

driving over the Concorde bridge because I love that view down the river so, but the cab went so slowly we did n't have to. It was all purple and gold, with the yellow moon and reflections in the Seine. I never saw such an evening.

The next morning I received your dear cable and that pleased me more than anything else. Thank you *all* for thinking of me. I've never been so far away before, have I?

The other night we returned home late and very tired and we were too late for dinner, — for a change, — so we went out and gave a farewell dinner] to ourselves: four omelettes and *lots* of strawberries. Home and to bed early — we were tired and excited and happy all at once. We left Miss Curtis's car beside the house in an open space behind the sidewalk, having taken everything takable out, and disconnected two spark-plugs.

We were barely horizontal between the sheets when tat-tat-tat — came at the door. Madame, backed by half the pensionnaires and the concierge, were in procession. We were taking such a risk in leaving the car there — such vandalism mauvais gens could commit. It was unthinkable to leave a car there, la la, and, anyway, we would have a procès verbal brought against us.

If it had been our car we would have taken the

risk, but we did n't dare with some one's else. Up we got and dressed as hurriedly as possible. It seemed like a nightmare. Back we put the spark-plugs and the other things and started off.

We went to our place, where the jitney is kept, to ask if they could possibly take another car, and they said yes, there was just room — but that we'd have to take the car out before 7.30 in the morning because the car in back of it was to leave at that time. It did n't seem as though we could bear it. I suggested, although I knew it was wild (Marje is too mechanical for words), that we leave the brake off and put logs under the wheels and that he just give it a shove at 7.29 the next morning and roll it down the incline into the street. By Jove, he agreed. We slept peacefully that night and called for the car at a quarter of nine the next morning, as we always do.

Marje discovered that her passport had run out, and as it is always a good thing to have about, we chased over to the Embassy after Saturday morning conference and had it renewed. She was off, too, for a sudden trip to the devastated towns, and we realized that we were to be separated for two whole days. You know, it was the first time since Bordeaux. I felt widowed, and she thought it was going to be a crazy

party and was off the whole idea, anyway. But she left at three sharp and I went and had a shampoo. The Ambulance men who had brought over the candy from Mrs. Crocker had asked Marje to dine at the Chinese Umbrella that night, and she had n't been able to let them know she could n't make it; so just before she left I promised to take Mrs. Allen and Mary, with whom I was going to spend the night, to dinner there and ward the men off. The bank was closed, and Marje had had to borrow some money from me. This and the dinner don't sound related, but they were.

I was pleased that the Allens would go with me — I run over there quite a lot and they always have something extra for me, and are kindness itself, anyway. But I discovered I had just twenty francs to my name. Now the Chinese Umbrella has the best straight American food in town, but it is expensive, as everything is nowadays. I never was so nervous.

I met the Ambulance boys safely enough and painted a colorful picture of Marje's departure and they were successfully thrilled.

But for dinner — we had orangeade and fried chicken, slipping around our plates with no vegetables (happily the asparagus had been used up — also the potatoes!); cornbread, and finally

strawberry shortcake. When pay time came I stepped into the office planning to throw myself on Miss Pabris's (the proprietor's) neck if all were not well. She knows me because I got a job through Mrs. Shurtleff for one of my protégées washing dishes at the Chinese Umbrella. But it was nineteen francs. I pulled out my francs, and largesse with a stray fifty centimes, and stepped proudly out — not knowing where Metro tickets, not to mention a taxi, were to come from.

As we passed the kitchen windows a voice hailed me and there was Mme. Beau, my friend and protégée, with a dishtowel clutched in one hand, and five francs extended in the other. The poor thing owed it to me, she said. I had utterly forgotten it; part of some money I had lent her when her baby died. Mrs. Shurtleff thought it was better to have her pay part of it back.

Well, there was supply — what cared I for the Metro? We looked for a taxi, but there was none to be had. So I contented myself with buying three tickets as pompously as possible.

On Monday, hard work moving furniture and taking packages with two amusing Ambulance boys, just landed, to help me. One from Montana, the best-looking thing you could hope to see, was equally entertaining on the subject of

the "Harvard Sisters" who had come over on the boat with him, and of his Paris experiences.

From tea-time on, I was all ears to hear Marje drive up. Finally she came. About 8.30 it was. Such a lot as she had to tell. Perhaps I shall have something first hand for you some day, but certainly what she said was worth talking about. The party was made up of two carloads; among them, Mr. and Mrs. Will Irwin, and Mrs. Norman Hapgood.

Now I could never drive a car over such roads or take care of the engine or tires if there should be any trouble (Marje had three punctures), so my idea is to go as a journalist and take the same route as this party did. Do you think, Father, you could get me a chance? Think over your newspaper acquaintance.

Devotedly,

ESTHER.

XX

FROM MARJORIE

12 *Place Denfert-Rochereau, July* 4, 1917.

Dearest Mother and Daddy: —

It is eleven o'clock in the morning, and by all rights I should be working in the Vestiaire, but here I am at home writing you. I'll tell you why. First place, it is the *4th of July*, and I am away from home for the first time; second place, it is Wednesday, and I want to get this letter off to-day, so that you will surely get it.

Everything is most delightfully upset at the Vestiaire. Rootie and I turned up for work as usual this A.M., and found that the balcony of the Arts Décoratifs building — on rue Rivoli — had been offered to the workers at the Vestiaire this morning, to watch the parade of *our* soldiers! We just all tumbled into the two cars as fast as we could, — Dr. Shurtleff coming in ours, — and with Rootie driving, we followed Miss Curtis as fast as we could over to the Louvre. When we arrived at the entrance to the garden, under those old gray stone arches, there were many policemen guarding the way, and they

all pointed down the street, saying that we must follow the Quai, but Mrs. Shurtleff leaned out of the car and said that we were an American œuvre, and that we were going to see our soldiers from special seats, so they let us through. We put the cars in one corner of the garden and then went through to the Arts Décoratifs building. The balcony was one flight up, and almost on the corner of rue des Pyramides, where the statue of Jeanne d'Arc is. We could see the procession as it rounded the corner at the Place de la Concorde, and watch it out of sight down the rue Rivoli. The sidewalks were already lined with people, and the balconies all along were full of people. Just as we could hear the drums faintly, and could just make out the Garde de Paris on their horses, with their white belts and shining brass helmets, we heard an ah-h — run through the crowd. A flying machine — one of the smaller French ones, with the tricolor painted on each wing — was making circles and diving down low, and soaring up again over the soldiers as they crossed the Concorde. The pilot was magnificent to watch, but very reckless, for he flew so low and turned such tremendously quick curves that if anything went wrong, he would have hurt many people, and, of course, not had a chance himself. How-

ever, it was wonderful to watch, and got the crowd thoroughly excited. It made me think of the performance the first man gave who went up to show us — when we were at Chaudon, seeing the American Escadrille. When *he* came down, he got fits from the captain for taking such chances! After a short wait, they came, and the crowd just went mad: first, the Garde Républicaine, on wonderful-looking horses; then a French band, all in uniform, of course, and much to our joy they struck up a tune just at our corner. They were such a fine-looking lot of men — short, thick-set, hardy, jovial chaps, each one with a rose either pinned to his coat or stuck in his helmet strap. The few soldiers who formed sort of a guard for the band had their roses stuck in the end of their rifles!

After these came the Americans!! Oh, it was great! A score of mounted officers leading, with one French capitaine in the middle, and then the band, with a drum major and all! It was too thrilling to ever put down on paper. The crowd just howled and shouted and jumped up and down, threw flowers, and we on the balcony yelled as loud as we could. Then another very fine-looking officer, and right behind him the soldiers. Not so very many, only one battalion, — the Sixteenth Infantry, the flag said, — but a

fine-looking lot of soldiers. They were noticeably taller than the French, were very thin, and all much tanned. I think they must have been in Mexico. The crowd let the first half march past, but the last division, which for some reason did not have their rifles, were surrounded by the mob, which just carried them along, all good-naturedly shouting and pushing, so that the ranks were broken badly in some places. This did not add to the looks of the parade from a military point of view, but it was so typically French. They simply had to join in, and the police were powerless, so that the end of the parade was a seething mass of soldiers, Boy Scouts, men and women, with a few police trying vainly to keep the people back. I shall never forget it. It was magnificent. I hate to think that our country has come into it finally, and I could n't help thinking all the time that these men, who are walking down the street so gayly now, will probably go to the front and be killed soon; what for? It does seem so wicked, but the French need something to put new enthusiasm into them, for even that undying thing, French courage, is showing signs of wearing out after these three years, and now the American soldiers actually getting here does thrill them. It was so thrilling to see a French crowd get so

excited. You know how it just carries you away to hear thousands yelling and clapping. It was mighty interesting. I imagine it is about the first time that "The Fourth" has been celebrated in Paris. After it was over, we came back to the Vestiaire, and settled down to a morning's work. I told Dr. S. that we ought to have a holiday this afternoon, and he agreed; so he talked to Mrs. S. and we are to have the whole P.M. free! I had left my typewriter at home, so I brought my cards and things home, and am going to do them after lunch and to-night. They can wait a little, and I do want to get this off so.

I will take a chance on the censor reading this, and tell you the little that we know over here. In many ways we are as much out of touch with things as you are. France does seem to be really feeling the war more than she has admitted hithertofore. It is evident in the way the people talk in the Metro and at the restaurant and everywhere. It is shown in the constant strikes — the women too. This last strike of the taxis is in some ways a good thing — the Metro now runs all night, or rather until midnight, which is much more convenient. Russia, from all one hears, is out of the game, for the present, at any rate. She is not to be reckoned with either way. Dr. G. feels that the Allies are lucky if she does

not make a separate peace. Mr. A. feels that if the Allies with our help, mostly moral help, can give Germany a big scare in the next few weeks, maybe there will be an upheaval there, and that the Kaiser will abdicate, and then every one will be ready to talk peace. If not, and if the Germans get a good harvest, — and there is every prospect of their doing so, — he feels that she has won; that she can go on forever. Every one now admits, even French officers, that the spring offensive was a failure, and the loss of life was something terrible, worse than Verdun; also that the Germans have the upper hand now in a military way. The submarine question you can get little news about. England runs that news, and so one can tell nothing. Certainly there are a great many more losses than they will acknowledge. For instance, Dr. Gibbons told me that several times he will see in the German lists certain boats sunk many days before the British publish it. There is no doubt about it, the French are lacking many things, principally flour and sugar. The bread over here is very bad now, very dark, coarse, and often sour. We buy bread baked in loaves from a pain de santé store, which is conveniently located on rue Ernest Cresson. Inasmuch as London, at any rate, was much more poorly off than Paris when I was

there in January, it is reasonable to suppose that they are still worse off, particularly as the Germans have sunk more English ships than any other nation's. It seems to be hard to get any definite reports as to the conditions in England; no one comes to France via England any more!

It is pretty late now, so I will stop. Lots and lots of love from your daughter,

MARJE.

XXI

FROM ESTHER

Place Denfert-Rochereau (XIV), July 23, 1917.

Dearest Mother: —

It is great to know that you are all so happy at Bailey's and accomplishing so much for us. Little sister, sitting with hands folded on the other side of Periscope Pond, wonders why the youngsters don't amuse themselves sometimes by erecting, or by listening to Charles Thomas erect, a good spring-board. We've needed one long; and if you don't think that summer posterity would be grateful, then you don't know this member of it as well as I think you do.

I have the queerest feeling when I talk about summer and Bailey's. Life goes along just the same here: up every morning, work all day, tea, more work, dinner, write, or play, and then bed. The weather is cool and beautiful, sometimes quite cold, occasionally rainy, but always I think of it being April, or possibly May; and a week from Wednesday is the first of August. Guess where I'll be! Our vacation plans are very exciting and I can't wait for this week to be over. This is how things have worked out.

When Father cabled me about going to Switzerland, the last thing on earth that I wanted to do was to go on a vacation. I considered my week of grippe and my week at Saint-Germain a terrible lapse, and wanted to do everything in the world to make up for it. Agathe had been sent on a vacation, because she was worn out, and then I went off, leaving Mrs. L—— all alone at the Vestiaire. I worked as hard as I could during May, doing Vestiaire work in the morning, and visiting in the afternoon, driving the car a good deal, taking the big packages to the stations and sending them off, and doing a good many odd jobs. On the 15th of June, Mrs. L—— went away on her vacation, and I was left in charge of the Vestiaire, with Agathe to help. It was a circus and I enjoyed it hugely. Then on the 23d Marje broke her wrist and besides being pretty hard to bear for a while, it tied things up considerably. I was the sole chauffeur for the Association, and the sole hairdresser, amanuensis, shoe-tier, bath-giver, etc., at Place-Denfert. Miss Curtis went over to the American Red Cross about the first of July, where she is invaluable. We miss her tremendously, however, and there will have to be a new distributing of work in the fall. Marje and I just adore her, and we miss working with her,

but she brings Miss Sturgis down to work every morning in the car so that we see her a good deal, anyway. She is the most clear-headed, honest, intelligent, nice person I ever knew. She is always a sport about everything — I can't imagine her doing anything that was n't so square that an ordinary person would n't ever even think of doing it. Marje and I would like to be just like her — and if ever anybody was n't, it 's me! She has blue eyes and a deep voice, anyway; and I don't believe you can be really efficient without them.

Well, there was n't much chance for a vacation for me, was there? And I had no desire to go away and would even now stay with Marje if her arm was n't healing so wonderfully that she can go away right on schedule too. Mrs. L—— got back last Monday, the 16th, and Mrs. Shurtleff left on Tuesday, the 17th. I took her and all her trunks down to Gare Montparnasse in a perfect cloudburst, and then had to come back for a little hatbox. It's the best thing I do to handle other people's trunks; but you just wait till next Tuesday and I'll be off myself. Mrs. Shurtleff is beyond compare adorable, and I was glad of the extra visit I had with her.

These last two weeks are being spent in winding up loose threads, having a few families come

to the Vestiaire, moving the last people on our list, going out to Montrouge for our last gasoline supply, calling for contributions of beds, sewing-machines, etc., buying a store of food for the Food Department, etc., etc.

We have arranged with friends to take turns at the office during August, attending to important mail, sending out notices that the Vestiaire is closed until October, giving out food to our regular families every Tuesday, etc. The weather is no hardship — nothing like the heat of May and June, and for blueness and clearness equaled only at Bailey's.

Well, Marje and I decided, way back when the snow flew, that we would be one and inseparable, now and forever, in regard to vacation; but as August loomed nearer, all we heard were the most discouraging reports of discomfort and expense in regard to hotels. So many of the usual resorts are closed that the few hotels anywhere that are attractive, that are open, boost their prices way up. The last thing we wanted to do was to chase around after vacation started, to find a perch. We inquired about Switzerland and were told by the Embassy that it was feasible; but by business men and the general public that it was made as difficult and unpleasant as possible to get back. Marje dreads a long train

trip, and I knew Mrs. Shurtleff would have a fit if we went, and would worry over us.

One day we asked Miss Curtis and Miss Sturgis quite casually what their plans were, and Miss Curtis said that all she wanted was to be "somewhere near the sea, tied by the leg and left to browse." Then Miss Buchanan, the terribly nice Scotch girl, sculptor, who gives half her time to the work, was sounded, and we found we all wanted the same thing. We got Baedeker, picked out euphonious names, and wrote to thirteen different hotels. One answered — and sent a hideous post-card view. Miss Sturgis and Miss Curtis keep house and were going to send the maids off somewhere. Suddenly they proposed taking a villa, and a Miss Hyde, also a worker, told us of the villa she had rented last year, and I went over and telegraphed, and yesterday morning got a reply that it was free, so we've taken it! It's in Brittany, near Dinard, and we go Tuesday, July 31st, on a couchette, and arrive the next morning. We have no linen and no silver, no coal or wood; no lamps or anything; but we have plans! Does n't it sound entrancing? Villa Valérie, Val André, Côtes-du-Nord. I'm just squealing with joy!

ESTHER.

XXII

FROM MARJORIE

Villa Valérie, Val André, par Pleneuf, Côtes-du-Nord, August 7, 1917.

Dearest Mother: —

Back to the country is my cry! Simple life, and, therefore, simple paper. We bought this at Pleneuf the day before yesterday, when for the second time we tooted over there to get our papers signed, only to find that the Mairie closes at eleven and at four! Since then we have decided that it is easier to let the paper question slide, as long as the Mairie has such inconvenient hours!

We certainly are the luckiest crew that ever sailed! Here we are comfortably settled in a nice little villa, with all the comforts of home and none of the responsibilities, for the maids (Miss Curtis's and Miss Sturgis's) take all of that, and all we have to do is to eat the excellent food which is offered us and sleep and loaf all day long. We have all wanted to go off for the month together, but have not known where to go nor how to get there; so we sat around

and waited for something to happen, and sure enough, a friend offered us this villa. We just grabbed it, and came down a week ago to-morrow. I simply cannot believe that we are in France. Paris, refugees, jitney Fords, and work seem so far away. We are certainly leading a healthy life, and, if we do not all go back to Paris with a healthy burn and lots of energy, it will not be the fault of the wonderful air and, I might say, sea, down here. I do not think that any of us realized how tired we were until we arrived. Since then we have taken things easy.

We breakfast any time after 9 A.M., and we babies (Rootie and myself) have an EGG for breakfast. That does not sound like anything to you, but it means a lot to us — nice, fresh eggs that are brought in by a girl who makes me think of Josey, she is so persistent; the poor hens hardly have time to lay, she is looking for the eggs so constantly! Also we have our coffee more like American citizens! No more boiled milk for us; also toasted bread. We find that the bread here is very good, and particularly so when toasted. After breakfast, we all sit around and plan what is to happen. Usually Miss Sturgis and Miss Curtis and Miss Buchanan go off to paint, leaving Rootie and myself. We try

to write a few letters, but it is awfully hard, with all the things we want to talk over now that we have the time, and with the delightful peasant women cutting the hay and doing the gardening right under our windows. Also there is always Marthe, very different, very quiet and gentle, and quite reconciled to our queer ways; but Marthe cannot get over the "Demoiselles" putting butter on fried potatoes! However, she brushes our clothes so hard and so faithfully that it makes me wish I had brought my suit down to be cared for by her.

Luncheon comes at 12.30, or whatever time we get home. We have a way of just running up to the top of the hill for one peep at the sea at 12.15, which gives us great joy, and does not seem to bother the maids. We eat on the porch, all covered with honeysuckle, roses, and with a beautiful fig tree just outside.

The war seems very far away down here. There is a hospital in the village, but otherwise than that one can hardly believe that while we are loafing and playing down here, men are being slaughtered at the front, which, after all, is not too far away! I told you that Miss Curtis went over to the Red Cross, for they offered her a splendid position in just the line of work she is most interested in, and, of course, Mrs. Shurt-

leff would n't have her stay with our little work when she has the chance to be part, and an important part, of such a big one. She is to take charge of the reconstructing of four devastated villages, which are to be models to the rest which the Red Cross expect to do later. She goes up from here on the 13th, and, after she gets her papers, will go to the villages in question and *live* there, working among the people, planning how to get the village on its feet again. All her work is to be with the view to making recommendations in the future to other committees who will do the same work. The Red Cross is to work through existing organizations, and to make recommendations and give money to workers who will be capable of reorganizing these villages. Miss Curtis will have a wonderful experience, won't she? She is taking Miss Sturgis with her, which is rather a gloom for us, for I do not believe that we will ever see either of them at 18 rue Ernest Cresson again, for they are wavering about going home this winter. Also, of course, the Red Cross will work in many other fields, but this reconstruction is one of the most important.

Needless to say, I was unable to finish this without being interrupted. To-day is Tuesday,

and I cannot believe that we have been here a whole week. Miss Curtis will be leaving us soon, and then we will all be left to amuse ourselves. Yesterday she suggested that we should each tell all we could about our homes, families, and she and Miss Sturgis proceeded. They were too funny. They had to correct each other all the time, and, of course, they each know all about the other's relations. They kept it up for a couple of hours, giving us the most minute details about the sisters and brothers, and also describing the insides of their town and country houses! It was such fun, we enjoyed it thoroughly. To-day Rootie, Miss Buchanan, and I tell about our folks. I just have to laugh when I think of how I will describe the Green House which is so beautiful when you learn to appreciate it, but, from a purely architectural point of view, is not perfect! Also 378! Never mind, I am just waiting to have them all down to Marion some day, and to show them what a wonderful family I have, and to give them a sail that will make them all jealous the rest of their lives. I feel as if I were more or less equipped to tell about the Roots, and I guess that Rootie feels the same about us, so I suppose we will be able to supplement each other's story.

We have discovered another attraction to this

villa! Out in a very dirty and unattractive-looking henyard, which Miss Curtis wanted to investigate, we found a box covered with wire, and with five or six of the dearest little rabbits you ever saw. They are quite tame and allowed us to hold them for a long time, just cuddling down on our necks, all warm and so soft! I am happy now, for I have a pet to play with. I admit that we need a dog, but that does not seem to be practicable just now, so the bunnies will have to do.

Luncheon is almost ready, and I plainly see that to be popular I had better stop this noise. I will write you again soon, and tell you more about how perfectly lovely it is here. Until then don't worry about me not having a good rest and a splendid time, for I am. I have already plans as to what a lot more work Rootie and I can do this winter, now that we will be the oldest workers — not in years, but in time. Lots and lots of love to all. You have none of you said whether you liked or even read my letter about going up to the front. I sent it by Ibby with the pictures and relics for Josey.

Lots and lots of love from

Your daughter,

MARJE.

XXIII

FROM ESTHER

Villa Valérie, Val André, Côtes-du-Nord,
Sunday morning, August 26.

DEAREST FAMILY: —

Last week I let time and the postman creep up on me so that I did n't have time to write, but I hope from my meager notes you have been able to get some sort of an idea of Val André and of our household here. It has been a month of glorious weather, with such clouds and shadows as I never saw before I had a paint-box. The cliffs are high and rounded, covered with gorse, thistles, and other wild flowers. They drop steeply down to a rocky base, and then smooth away in a glorious beach. Val André and the headlands just to the north form a sort of ace of clubs, with beaches in between. The big popular beach, edged by pink and turquoise bathing-houses and high-shouldered stone villas, we shun consistently. In the afternoon it is rather lovely to watch the ever-active little French children, barelegged and nimble, build sand-castles to stand on triumphantly until the incoming tide

has flattened out their afternoon's work. The dark-haired bonnes sit in groups on camp-chairs and sew as they gossip, and here and there a deeply veiled mother makes a dark note as she sits quietly in the shade of a brilliantly striped awning.

There is a military hospital in an old convent on the main road, and the convalescents wander around, or lean out of the windows. These and the occasional permissionnaires are the only close reminders of the war that we have. The beautiful rolling wheat-fields behind our villa are cultivated by women, and it makes my back ache to watch them lean over, hour after hour, their sunburned hands making heavy bundles of wheat.

We have spent two or three glorious nights in a favorite hollow on the hillside, just at the top of the highest falaise. We put the two big hold-alls on the ground, then a coat, then ourselves, then blankets. You never saw such stars. Early in that first morning we heard voices down on the beach below, and saw the fisher-women with their lanterns taking fish out of big nets stretched on the sand.

Then the dawn came, and a pink and lavender and yellow sunrise. We sat up on our elbows and watched. The sand was wet, and the grass

about us covered with dew. The light comes so subtly.

We did n't wake again until after eight. Marje and I scrambled down the cliff and had a delicious swim. The water was a clear emerald and the foam as white as white!

We have had a glorious time with Miss Curtis — Aunt Midge, as we call her. The daughter of the family with whom she and Miss Sturgis have lived, Mlle. Griette, came on Thursday and makes a fascinating sixth to our party. Her father was president of the Collège de France and a well-known man. She is cultured to a degree, about twenty-four, and simply charming. She understands English perfectly, — her knowledge of English literature puts Marje and me to shame, — yet she hates to speak a word. In consequence, we speak English and she French, and the effect is sometimes joyous in the extreme.

Yesterday afternoon we went crabbing. Some of the costumes had to be improvised, and I'll describe no more minutely than to say that they ranged from simplest in-wading to full bathing-suits. It is wild sport, especially if you are particularly fond of crab-meat with mayonnaise, and yet your fingers have a natural timidity!

Tableau of Marje and Mlle. Griette kneel-

ing on slippery seaweed, prettily reflected in a pool.

"By golly, there goes one!"

"*Où est-ce?*"

"Oh, a big green one. Look under that rock, I bet he's — "

"*Zut! Il s'est échappé — sale bête!!*"

"Not on your tintype — not while Sister Marje has a say-so — I've got my finger in the small of his back; you hold him while I get the net."

"*Oh, mais, en voici un plus grand! Où vas-tu, mon vieux? Oh, Oh, il me tient! Oh, là, là! — Il manque de charme, celui-ci — enfin ça est*" — etc., etc.

For two hours we splashed around, chasing and pouncing and yelling, and got in all sixteen crabs — some whoppers. Then we took a luscious swim in the clear sunlit water.

This mixture of *dolce far niente* and a lark is going to put us in fine trim for the fall work. Don't forget, Father, you're going to get some confiding editor or journalist to send me to the devastated towns?

Love,

ESTHER.

XXIV

FROM ESTHER

September 4, 1917.

Dearest Mother: —

The cable came yesterday afternoon and caused a great stir in this little ménage, I can tell you. I hope to go to the Embassy to-day and get my papers through. Father was a dear to accomplish my wish. I'm grateful; but so excited that I'm shaky, and what did I have to do this morning but run into a taxicab, and we've spent hours writing a formal statement to the insurance companies in both French and English; and I *only* broke one spoke of his wheel, but it is too embêtant for words. We have to send them notice within twenty-four hours and I don't want that taxi-driver to have a show at making a fuss.

Mrs. Shurtleff finally got a laisser-passer to go to the evacuated villages with clothes for the people left there, and she and Miss Curtis left Friday in the jitney. Miss Curtis has lent us her Ford touring-car until her return, and, believe me, we have hardly let the engine cool off. Sat-

urday afternoon we did shopping, and it was such a joy to be able to go about from place to place in the heat without having to think of taxis or walking or anything. I asked Miss Hubbard where to get a nice dress. The only thing I have to wear is the old blue-and-tan, and its clutch on life is weakening visibly. The lace and net are torn to shreds, the sleeves that I put in last spring are hanging by a thread, and Leo has nothing on it for spots.

Well, she told me to go to Jenny, she being the least expensive of all the good places. I said, "How much do you suppose the cheapest little frock would be?" and she said, "Oh, of course, she does n't touch anything under seven hundred francs — but they wear forever, and it would be wonderful for our business." "I guess it would be death on mine," I told her, and I should have to hear more directly from headquarters before any such altruistic venture. After the war, I'd just like to get something wonderful, but not for now, unless Father wants me to!

So Marje and I went modestly to the Printemps, and having decided that our pet aversions were bottle green and elbow sleeves, we bought dresses, exactly alike, with those two features as keynotes. We simply had to have something for a dinner to-morrow night, and really

they're not bad. We'll have some one take our pictures together. Then Saturday evening we had dinner together downtown, and went out to Saint-Germain. I never felt such heat. We got to our beloved Mme. Poitier's where I stayed when I was ill, and she said that she had received our telegram too late and that all she had was a single room under the roof. You can't imagine how hot it was. We laughed our heads off because, of course, our rooms in Paris are nearly always cool. But we bunked as well as we could. I spent half the night on the floor with one pillow lying on a strip of oilcloth which was the coolest thing in sight. We had boiled eggs for breakfast, which made up amply for any discomfort.

We read and slept and explored the lovely cool forest on Sunday, so different now from the last week of April.

Monday evening we met Mrs. Allen and Mary and had a picnic supper in the wild part of the Bois de Boulogne on the banks of the Seine. We had an awfully good time — a beautiful evening and luscious cheese and guava jelly that Miss Curtis and Miss Sturgis gave me on my birthday.

Last night Marje took Miss Sturgis and me to Armenonville for dinner; the swellest place right in the Bois, with all the officers and their fine

friends of the bonton there, eating melon at five francs a slice. We had a great time — we saw several American officers tramp in, among them André de Coppet. He nearly fell over when he saw me. We had quite a chat about his coming over at the last moment as interpreter.

More nice young boys are wending their way Parisward — and in particular to Place Denfert-Rochereau. Davis Ripley made a long call the other afternoon with a Harvard coeval; and a letter of introduction from Mrs. Hastings this afternoon presents a Holyoke youth. People keep coming from Boston to see Marje, and we are kept pretty busy.

I started this on the way to work this morning and could n't finish. Now we have finished work and it is tea-time. We have been taking turns driving around wet, slippery streets making calls, and Marje is calling me to tea and the remains of the guava.

Your letters have been most interesting lately and my next ought to be so!

Love,

ESTHER.

XXV

FROM ESTHER

September 9, 1917.

DEAREST FATHER: —

I've been there! Past the sentries, through the devastated villages, right into the army zone.

How many pictures I've seen marked, "Somewhere in France," or, "Results of German Shells." How endlessly have I pored over Sunday supplements or watched miles of film click by, trying always to imagine myself really standing on French soil, seeing real things. But the pictures were always just black and white, and I never managed to step into them.

The refugees at the Vestiaire tell vivid stories, and they all have that inborn dramatic instinct which can make live the scenes they describe. But even from their background I had no idea of the look and atmosphere of the ruined towns as they now are. No one ever told me that the trenches taken from the Germans a few months ago would now be half hidden by long grass and brilliant red poppies, nor that the summer sunshine could ever soften the grimness of barbed

wire and dug-outs. Yesterday I saw for myself.

Compiègne is the sentinel to the "zone des armées." At the railroad station you must present your sauf-conduit before you go through the gate, and frown as you do so, for certainly the official will frown at you. The streets are full of soldiers and officers, blue with them, and great military trucks grind past at every turn. Even the churchyard is filled with lines of military wagons, and horses were tethered at its portals.

We arranged to have a bite to eat at the hotel, and I, for one, was surprised at the naturalness and comfort of the atmosphere. One of us, after standing at the elevator shaft several minutes, turned to the manager of the hotel and asked if she would have long to wait. "I hope not, Madame," he said, — "just until the end of the war."

As we ate our luncheon we looked from the dining-window across the big square to the palace, now used as military headquarters. The sentries passed and repassed with their heavy guns before the entrance gate.

Our military cars, painted dull gray with the numbers in white across the wind shield, were waiting to take us on our wonderful journey.

As we left the narrow streets of Compiègne, we passed several motors bearing important-looking officers going to or from the front; they tore around corners in just my idea of a warlike way — very little gold braid, but business-like and grim.

The country was lovely: rolling fields, and deep woods, rich with foliage. My idea of a devastated region had been a large plain, covered with small ruined villages, blackened by smoke. I had pictured everything bare and muddy — no grass, lowering clouds; but here was blazing sunlight, and such grass and flowers as I had never seen.

At Noyon we were joined by a French lieutenant, who acted as guide to us, and was High Mogul to all guards and officials along our route. He looked skeptical of a party of women, even Americans (who are known to be wild), tearing along on the roads where only soldiers, trucks, and beasts of burden are seen.

The crops interested me very much. Large fields of wheat and barley, as well as trim lines of lettuce and garden truck, were on each side of the road near every settlement. I asked who planted them. "Different people," said our lieutenant; "the people who have been living here right along under the Germans, the soldiers

who delivered the territory last March, the civil population who came back to their homes when the Boches were driven out."

Until March 18th, the Germans held French territory up to the line passing through Rossières, Andréhy, Lassigny, Ribecourt, and Soissons. They retreated on that date, and the present line passes just west of Saint-Quentin, La Fère, and Barésis. Our route was a big circle through the section between these lines among the towns most lately relinquished by the invader.

I felt reluctant to be whisked along so fast, for I wanted to see just how these bridges had been blown up. I wanted to ask that old man over there, hoeing in the field with a tiny little girl beside him in a black apron, what he had seen and felt, and how he liked the Boches. But we seemed always to keep the same pace.

At Chauny we slowed up, however. We passed down an aisle of ruins, and stopped in a big square. We were told: "They are shelling the town, so that you run a risk if you stop here, but they seem to be lazy to-day, so don't worry." I was so glad to get out of the car and wander around according to my fancy, that I did n't give a thought to the possibility of shells. And I could n't see why they should want to keep on

firing, as there did n't seem much more to do to the place. I stood at first and looked about me. Not one roof to be seen — just walls, and not more than one or two stories of these. Nothing horizontal — just the perpendicular skeletons of buildings, and piles, piles, piles of stone in between.

The streets have been cleared of rubbish, by the French, so that the square or "place" looked as neat and ready for market-day as though the market-women might come at any moment with their pushcarts, station themselves in the center, and display piles of carrots, cherries, potatoes, and radishes to tempt the passing throng.

But the passing throng had passed somewhere else. We saw nobody. On one side was a wall marked "Théâtre" — just the front of it left, all the rest ruins. Across the square was a large building with "Palais de Justice" carved over the portal, portions of the front ripped away so that we could see the different rooms and central staircase leading up, and up, to nothing.

Down the cobbled streets which radiated from the square were the remains of the shops and homes of the people of Chauny. Ruins everywhere. The houses had evidently been blown up from within, causing the roofs and floors to fall in a heap into the cellar, so that it was difficult to

walk in and look about. The town has, of course, been shelled as well as mined; the Germans were determined to wipe it out completely, so that the iron and sugar industries which made Chauny well known may never be resumed.

The strangest kind of things would be lying in the piles of débris — an iron bedstead, twisted and red with rust, an old baby carriage, a boot, a candlestick, all sorts of little domestic things. In many houses the tiled fireplaces were intact, and stood up among all the wreckage. Our lieutenant climbed into one of the houses and brought back a few tiles which he gave us. Mine is a heavenly turquoise blue, smooth and perfect. It is the one relic that I cared to keep. I prefer it to a charred brick or a bent piece of iron. It was there in its place in the war, during the burning and pillaging, and weathered the bombs and the shells.

Through the back windows were vistas of grass and trees. I saw an enchanting ravine with a stony brook running through it, and gardens, full of rank grass and weeds. Here and there a holly bush looked about in surprise at being so neglected this year.

The church in Chauny is only half destroyed. Most of the roof has been blown up, and the west end of the nave is piled high with wreckage,

but the altar is untouched and there is enough roof left to shelter about ten rows of seats. A rough partition of wood and tarred paper has been built across the middle of the church, which divides the piles of broken stone, open to the blazing sunlight, from the altar half hidden and dim.

It was very quiet. I heard a bird chirping near by, and saw two sparrows fly through an opening and perch on a cornice over the cross. There is not much left in Chauny even for a bird.

The road leading north runs beside an embankment high enough to screen a motor from view. Where this embankment stops, a huge screen has been built of boughs woven in and out of a wire foundation; thus the road is hidden for miles, and military trucks, ammunition trains, themselves "camouflés," pass to and fro unobserved.

Near Villquiers-Aumont we began to see the cut-down fruit trees: I don't know whether to say fields of fruit trees, or orchards; for what we saw were rolling green fields, with fruit trees lying prone in even rows, their naked branches —

"Bare, ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang"

— ruined carefully and deliberately.

We stopped near an abrupt little hill. It looked like a giant thimble, with a rustic sum-

mer-house on top. This was once Prince Eitel Friedrich's lookout, and as we climbed up the carefully made stone steps, we saw more and more of the wonderful view he had chosen. French landscapes stretched away on every side, smooth fields, winding roads, and poplars. The group of poilus who were stationed in the look-out gave us a gay welcome. They were ready with information about the surrounding countryside, and pointed out the various villages in the distance. The officer in charge lent us his field-glasses and showed us to the north the spires of the cathedral at Saint-Quentin — still held by the Boches.

We took a détour in order to see the grave of Sergeant McConnell, the American aviator who was killed last spring. A French flag and two American flags nailed to a wooden cross mark the grave; fifty yards away are a few splinters of iron and wood, the remains of his aeroplane, which indicate the spot where he fell. Some splinters of wood, some rusty bits of iron, part of the engine, are all that is left of his aeroplane. As I looked back towards the grave I saw our soldier chauffeur stooping to place a bunch of wild poppies below the flags. He walked back to his place at the wheel without knowing that I had seen him. It was a small thing, but I felt

grateful to the American who had made a simple Frenchman wish to pay this tribute. I felt, too, a warm pride to think of this corner of a foreign field (to paraphrase Rupert Brooke) that is forever America!

We went next to Flavy-le-Martel. This town is half ruined and is inhabited only by soldiers. The great sight is a ruined factory, which is now a grotesque pile of rubbish — wheels and boilers and chimneys; the mass of broken stone and twisted iron is heaped to an immense height and in extent it looked to one like an acre of pure destruction.

Suddenly we heard discomforting sounds — guns, big guns, and not very far away. The entrance gate to the factory had been locked and barred with a sign, "No Admittance," in large letters, and we had to enter through a hole in the fence, but certainly that could n't mean that we were doing anything *dangerous?* One of the soldiers working near by motioned upwards, and we caught sight of a Boche aeroplane disappearing in a big white cloud — lesser white clouds kept multiplying as the French anti-aircraft guns fired on. Each shot sounded like hitting a barn door with a baseball — only fifty times as loud. I was all for standing with my neck craned waiting to see what would happen next, but the

soldiers gave one laconic look (if a look can be laconic) at the signs in the heavens, and walked off to the "abri" or shelter. Our lieutenant asked us to follow, so down we plunged into a little cellar-like place after the soldiers.

"Five men were wounded here yesterday by pieces of flying shell," said one of them; "so, Mon Dieu! it is not worth the trouble to make one's self a target to-day."

That seemed sensible enough, but it had never occurred to me that anything would ever come down and hit *me*. I'm not a soldier, I'm not even French, and everything about the front has always been a name to me until now. What am I usually doing the first week in July? I'm helping the kids set off firecrackers down on the beach — on a good old American beach; or getting the mail at the post-office to read the latest war news. *Zum-zum!* and here I am crouched down in an abri with some poilus, and a German biplane a mile in the air straight over my head. Would n't it be funny if — I wonder how thick the roof of this place is, anyway? *Zum, zum,* ZUM! How foolish to drop bombs on a place that is destroyed, anyway.

The firing became less frequent and the explosions farther off. We climbed out to the great outdoors again, and looked around. Noth-

ing to be seen or heard. Just as we started off, a last *zum!* and a fleeting glimpse of the Boche disappeared gayly into a cloud. That was a week ago; I'm wondering if they have got him by now.

Along the road on the way to Ham were rows of neat little brick and stone houses, so unlike anything I had seen that their very neatness looked strange. "The soldiers have already begun rebuilding," said the lieutenant. And they have done well, may I add; the architecture is of an unimaginative, cubelike variety, but a touch of poetry is supplied by the white muslin curtains and climbing nasturtiums! The soldiers, working with sleeves rolled up and with gorgeous red sashes round their waists, smiled and waved as we passed, and if we had slowed down who knows but that we should have had an invitation to tea; with a Boche avion only just lost from view.

It was an interesting road all the way. We met a priest trotting comfortably down the road on a fat chestnut mare. His gown fluttered and his beads swung by his side in time to the horse's gait. We all felt included in his smile as he lifted his shallow-crowned, wide-brimmed hat in greeting; we Americans bowed, the militaires saluted inflexibly.

Next we saw — or rather were stopped by — a herd of cows. They looked utterly peaceful and oblivious, and along with the window curtains and nasturtiums that we had just seen on leaving Flavy-le-Martel, they seemed to give hope that the forlorn shells of houses might one day become homes again. I asked our lieutenant what the enemy had done with the cattle that they had found when they came. He answered, smiling broadly, "Zay ett heem!"

Ham is interesting chiefly for its ancient château. The town itself is only partially destroyed, and there are at the moment fifteen hundred and thirty civilians living there. We got out of the motor by the bank of the canal, and looked first at the havoc wrought to it and the bridges. The sides have been blown up and great masses of stone have fallen into the ditch stopping up the deepest part of it. Rude wooden bridges have been built to replace the stone ones and to carry the traffic of trucks and military cars that are constantly passing. The trees that once stood in even rows along the banks have totally disappeared. Not a stump is left.

The canal widens just south of the main road, and begins to have the aspect of a stone quarry. There is a vast area of broken stone; groups of workmen applying themselves with pick and

shovel; iron cars drawn by mules moving here and there; and the noise of incessant labor. Across the excavation stands a great wall, fifty feet high, split down the middle as though by a stroke of lightning. Over the top you can just see the tower, with a pointed slate roof.

"But where's the château?" some one asked.

"Le voilà," said our guide.

Oh, the hours of labor that must be put in to restore what was once built so carefully. New trees will be planted, but the château can never be replaced. It's all unspeakable!

Just as we turned to take the road to Nesle (I never can be reconciled to pronouncing it "Nell" in view of neslerode pudding), I saw a storm-beaten signpost reading, "Saint-Quentin, 8 kilomètres" — just as though you could go there! I wonder just how soon one would be killed if she tried it?

As we drew near to Nesle we saw a sign by the road in English! Near a little bridge the warning, "Look Out — no truck over 17 tons," was posted. Magic language! There were only one or two Tommies about, but it was thrilling to be in a town that had been captured and occupied by the English. Along the road I had seen in several places signs reading, "Sens obligatoire"; translated literally this means "direction obli-

A German Graveyard

gatory." We should say, "one-way street." On a house standing in the middle of a trim field was painted, "Tipperary — Sens Obligatoire!"

We walked through the graveyard at Nesle, where French, English, and Germans are buried side by side. The soldiers' graves of all nations are nearly alike — plain wooden crosses bearing the name and regiment in black paint. They contrast strangely with the marble tombs and mausoleums decorated with colored bead wreaths, erected before the war.

A few of the German graves are more elaborate, flamboyant even. One monument in particular was a large sculptured plaster affair, depicting a German soldier against a background of burning houses, being crowned by an angel. Across the burning village scene a scornful French hand has scratched the words, "Camelotte Boche!" (Boche rubbish!)

It is amusing to see German prisoners at work repairing the damage they have done, rebuilding roads and bridges and canals. They make excellent workmen and seem content with their lot. A gray-clad figure, wearing the round fatigue cap with the red band around it, was mending a roof as we passed. He may well have set the bomb that was meant to level the house to the ground; but all the same he never turned his

round face towards us, or missed a stroke of his hammer in his apparent effort to make it bomb-proof in the future.

The city of Roye presents a new phase of destruction. Outwardly it looks normal enough, with the exception of the fine church and a few important buildings which are in ruins. But it is all a brick shell of what was once a city. The Germans have played a grisly joke on the inhabitants, who, when they return to their houses, discover the same old outside but the inside gone.

Each house has been systematically denuded of everything — furniture, decorations, glass, metals, tools, etc., and then the interior blown up. In the shops all the goods were emptied from the shelves on to the floor and then the roof exploded. Not a pane of glass, not a lighting fixture, not a lock or key, remains. The cost to the Germans in time and money alone must have been enormous.

I wandered around by myself exploring further these streets of hollow mockery. A woman was standing in the doorway of a shop, gazing curiously to see an untamed American behaving as if at home. We exchanged "Bon jours," and I begged permission to step into her shop while I changed a film in my kodak. The place was

bare, save for a few bicycle tires and tools piled on the counter, and these the woman told me she and her husband had buried when they were driven out nearly three years ago. The husband had been mobilized, and she, fortunately, had been able to go to relatives in the Midi.

"Goo!" came to me from the dark recesses of a perambulator, and there was a bouncing baby, born since the war. The woman came back six weeks ago, having heard that her shop was safe. She did not seem to be disheartened by the mutilation of her property and the loss of her stock, and has already tried to start in business again by selling odds and ends to the soldiers and few civilians who have returned like herself. "Mais que voulez-vous? Business does n't go very well these days." I smiled. Competition may be the life of trade, but customers are pretty handy to keep it going.

I wished her au revoir, and told her I'd come back some day when her shop is rebuilt and she is doing more flourishing business than ever before.

Beyond Roye about eight kilometres, "as the shell flies," the old first-line German trenches can be seen from the road. Barbed-wire entanglements stretch away to left and right, half

hidden in the grass, and dug-outs covered by heavy logs occur at intervals. Where the trenches began to run along close to the road, we left the motors and climbed down among the narrow, rustic walks that are trenches. The floors and walls are made of small boughs nailed nearly one inch apart, and the depth of the trenches is a little over six feet. They turn and twist unbelievably — apparently following the track of a spotted snake with a tummy-ache; and communication trenches, "boyaux," fork off every fifty feet or so, making a network of passages.

I saw a tube of iron with a star-shaped end which interested me; the lieutenant hastily called out that it was a hand grenade. I had read too many war stories to be inclined to have anything more to do with it, so I passed obediently by; the next minute I caught my foot in some infernal machine and my heart leaped as I wildly clutched at the sides of the trench for support. It was a twisted bedspring.

Near by was an opening twenty-five feet square with dug-outs along the edge, where officers evidently lived. There was a rustic table under a lattice-trimmed shelter, and a flight of birch steps led to the sleeping quarters!

The lavish grass and flowers constantly im-

pressed me. Around the trenches up to the very edges of the shell holes, over the famous strip called "No Man's Land," grows to-day a gorgeous carpet of green grass and wild flowers. I like to think that Nature has already begun to heal the scars of war.

A little village called Suzoy is already known for some rough paintings left on the walls of the main schoolroom, by the Germans. We stopped at the building and followed two little girls through the entrance; they showed us the pictures with pride; and for my part, I assure you, what met our eyes were the most astonishing mural decorations you ever saw.

Two naked figures, half man, half beast, sit opposite each other with faces turned to wink at you. They have horns and tails and the unmistakable Boche cap on their heads. Between them is a roaring fire on which they expect with relish to fry their supper. In their hands are two great peacock feathers which cross and make graceful crescents along the length of the wall. On the feathers are poised — or endeavor to be poised — miniature figures of the heads of the Allied nations. President Poincaré, in frock coat and stovepipe hat, is trying frantically to keep his balance; King George V is sprawling and just ready to fall; King Albert is hanging on

desperately by one hand; and the Czar, in ermine robes, is trying wildly to hold on to his crown and keep his equilibrium at the same time. The other kings are all awkwardly trying to keep from dropping off. In the center, directly over the flame is a whimsical Scotch lad, playing his swan-song on a bagpige. And always the big Boches leer diabolically.

The effect on me was at first to make me laugh, and then to make me rage. So cock-sure, so clever, so insulting! There were other caricatures on the side walls, medallion portraits of George V and Poincaré, but nothing so subtle as the big painting.

The little girls, who had stayed in the village throughout the German occupation, told us that the schoolroom was used as an officers' mess, and that there used to be a great many soirées there. It had taken a month to paint these modern frescoes, and the children had been allowed to watch the artist work.

"Were the Boches nice to you?" I asked one of them.

"Oh, yes, fairly — *assez gentils;* they taught us a little German, but we never speak it now."

"Did you have enough to eat?"

"But yes, food was brought to us every week by the Americans."

"Mademoiselle is American," put in the lieutenant.

"Tiens!" said the little girl, and grew too bashful to speak.

"We should have died but for the Americans," she said at last, looking down at her apron.

"You had rice and vegetables, I suppose. Did you ever have meat and eggs?" And I confess that for "eggs" I said, not "uh," but "uffe." The other child began to giggle.

"Tais-toi," exclaimed my little friend quickly. "Did n't you just hear that the lady is *American?*"

It might be hard to express thanks, but not while she was about should Americans be made fun of.

On our homeward journey I saw things that simply did not exist to my eyes earlier in the day. The country around Bailly is full of trenches and barbed wire, dug-outs, shell holes, and shade trees cut down by the road, all of which escaped me before I had had those five full hours of tense observation; and just as I did not at first distinguish the signs of war, so I did not fully consider until afterward the completeness of the destruction we had seen. In the section of forty miles square that we skirted, not one bridge is left — the only ones now in

existence are of temporary military construction. The same is true of telephone and telegraph poles — not one remains. Also there is not a stick of furniture of any sort except what was too heavy to be taken away, such as pulpits and big tables, which were hacked to pieces and are of no value now. That the furniture was not blown up with the houses I am sure, for not a piece can be found in the ruins, and I looked carefully for any trace. Germany must be full of French furniture, and what it is all wanted for I can't imagine.

It is wonderful what vistas can be thrown open by the experiences of one day. I never again can hear of any one who comes from Chauny or Roye or Lassigny without seeing row upon row of deserted, ruined houses. I never can hear of a fortune lost in the war without picturing the ruined sugar factory at Flavy-le-Martel. And yet the sight of men and mules and engines clearing out the canal at Ham is more significant than either of these, for it means that the energy which once built the cities of France is deathless. A new beginning is being made within sound of the guns; and we are helping. *We are helping!!*

ESTHER.

XXVI

FROM MARJORIE

September 12, 1917.

Dearest Family: —

You could never guess where I am, nor what I am doing! I am just this minute the guest of Mme. la Marquise Molinari d'Incisa, in a large château in Touraine. The other week-end guests — it being Monday to-day — consist of Mrs. W. and her daughter, Mrs. H. Mlle. la Forgue, whom I have written you about before, and who has been so nice to me in Paris, and her brother of seventeen, Mme. Molinari, and Rootie and myself make up the party! Needless to say, Rootie got me into this. I bucked and balked and tried not to come, but I am here. We met Mme. Molinari at Dr. Shurtleff's funeral, and she wanted to know what we were doing, and whether we would like to come down to Touraine and see her. She had a château for the month which belongs to the W —— s, who are in America! We more or less jokingly, on my part at any rate, accepted, and she said of course that there was nobody to keep her company, so we would be quite free, and could wear old clothes,

and so forth. The next thing I knew, Rootie had accepted definitely, and we were to start from Paris Monday A.M., having arrived from Val André via Saint-Michel the Saturday before. Start we did! I fortunately darned my only silk stockings, and had my sole white skirt laundered, and my beautiful blue linen one also put in order. We left Paris at ten o'clock, and met the La Forgues on the train, which was a shock to us. They told us they thought there were other guests already there! Half-way down, we changed at Vierjon, and when we got off the train (we were in uniform, of course), we heard English-speaking voices calling us, and on turning saw several American soldiers. We waved vigorously and went on, but were stopped by two of them running up and taking off their hats, offering their hands, and saying, "Do you folks speak English?" On our replying that we did, they let a yell, and calling their pals announced that they had "caught 'em, and you bet they can talk the lingo!" We were instantly surrounded, and our baggage taken from us, and we were led like queens to a compartment and sat on the seat while they lined up opposite and shot questions at us as fast as they could talk! I never had such fun. Of course, Mlle. la Forgue thought that we were quite mad, and a bit un-

ladylike, I guess, but do you know I did n't care at all. They were nice men, and they were so pitifully glad to hear some English! They were going on the same train as we were, which was fortunate for us, for I doubt if they would have let us off the train! We got more gossip as to what is going on in the army over here and at home than we would get from the papers in two years! They were all twelve of them volunteer men from the New York Telephone Company and the Western Union. (Their battalion consists of five hundred, of course, but these men were going to Saint-Nojan to drive up some trucks.) The former are receiving their usual wages from the company, with their governmental pay deducted. They seemed a nice crew, strong, hardy fellows, and maybe they did n't have a time getting over here — I mean on the way across the ocean! They have only been here a month, but they have already begun to lay wires from one end of the war zone to the other, all to communicate with Pershing's headquarters, which you probably know has been moved from Paris, and although I know where it is, I won't put it down, not so much on account of the censor as spies! We certainly had a good time. They had taken a first-class compartment, which is against all rules, for the army is

supposed to go third class, of course, but they had one forty-four hours' trip in French third class, and have vowed never again. They could none of them speak French, least of all the so-called interpreter, but they knew how to throw out any one who tried to enter their compartment, and did so with joy, saying something about "reservé pour la armée Amèricaine!" We stayed with them till we arrived, and you would have laughed to see them with Mme. Molinari. We had told them that we were going to visit a Marquise, and I think they expected a coronet and pages, and when charming Mme. M. stepped up and talked English with them, and shook hands with them, they could not believe that she was a title! My, it was funny!

After we had waved them off, and wished them luck, we turned to the château. It is quite near the station, so a little donkey named Kee Kee carries the bags up, and you walk a short way until you enter the estate. It is beautiful; all shade trees, with a spring you have to cross on stepping-stones, and such ivy and bushes and flowers! There are two houses — the more modern larger one, which has the dining-room and kitchen and library and big bedrooms, and then the old one, dating way, way back, where we are, and which is charming.

The W —— s put all their time and money into the grounds and vineyards, and the houses are simple and are lovely outside. They are up against the rocks, and the barn or cellar with the winepress is hewn in the rock, and has many underground passages which lead all over everywhere, and you can hear the spring gurgle under them at certain places. There is electric light and most of the comforts; also several dogs and rabbits. The gardens run down the terraces in front of the big house. They are mostly annuals now, and there are fig trees and lemon trees, which supply the lemon for our tea! The brook comes out in all sorts of beautiful and unexpected places, and makes pools. There is a lovely fountain which goes all the time, and which we can hear from our bedroom. The tennis court is hidden by trees and vines, and had just been put in shape so that Rootie and Mlle. la Forgue played this morning. Across the road is the path that leads through a tunnel under the railroad to the fruit garden and vineyards. Such fruit! — all the peaches trained in diagonal lines against a white stone and plaster wall, which has turned greenish from constant sprayings, and the plum trees bent to the ground with fruit, and the apples in rows making hedges like ours at Marion. We

ate fruit till we could literally eat no more. The grapes are mostly in houses, and such luscious ones I never saw. We walked through just picking off huge purple muscats with their beautiful bloom still on them, big white ones, and brown — in fact every sort. Each variety tastes better than the one you took before! The flowers do not compare with yours, Mother, but are effective. The usual standards, lovely at a distance, but I can hear you saying they should have been de-budded!

I was, of course, interrupted yesterday, and am now trying to finish while Rootic completes a sketch of our house, and the others get really dressed. We have breakfast at half-past eight, and some of us dress and the rest wear wrappers. As Rootie did not bring one, and had to borrow one which must have belonged to Mr. W——, and mine is that pink crêpe-de-chine affair which Ruth S—— made for me when I was at Farmington, we decided in favor of dressing for breakfast!

I see that I must stop, and go for a walk through the marvelous caves which go through the cliffs for miles around here, and are in part wine-cellars, some belonging to the W——s, and some not. We had wine from the cellar last

night, and it was excellent, I thought. Mme. Molinari is renowned even in Paris for her cuisine, so you can imagine whether we are having a good time or not! We had hot biscuits for breakfast yesterday, for the first time since I left home, and they sure tasted good.

We are really having a very good time, for we do just whatever we want to, and although we are not what you would call dressy, still we are at least clean. Rootie, having laughed me to scorn for bringing two waists and skirts, now wishes she had done the same thing herself. (We did not plan to stay more than twenty-four hours.) I am so hoping to find letters from both of you when I get back to Paris, for it is over two weeks since I got any word, although Rootie got a long letter from Mother! Rootie has been more wonderful than ever these last few days. She does fit in wonderfully. She is so very, very clever, and can do everything well, even playing bridge. When they get started on that, I retire to the library and have a delightful time reading everything in sight, and there are lots of books. Did I ask you if you have read "God, the Invisible King," by Wells? I enjoyed it.

Lots and lots of love to you both.

MARJE.

XXVII

FROM MARJORIE

12 *Place Denfert-Rochereau, Paris.*
October 21, 1917.

DEAREST FAMILY: —

You see I am being good this week and not neglecting you as I did two weeks ago. I still get embarrassed when I think of that time. We are hearing all sorts of rumors about no boats going for thirty days, but there is no reason to believe them any more than the many other rumors we hear all the time, so I shall keep on writing, anyway, and nowadays I make a carbon copy of each letter that I send. It does not take any longer, and it seems to me to be well worth while.

Things are about the same here. Very busy. We have finally secured the storehouse and are moving into it this week. The present plan is to have all our reserve stock there, and have only just enough on the shelves to meet the demands during the week. The car will go to the storehouse once or twice a week, and get the necessary things. In this way we will have

much more room in the vestiaires themselves, and it will be easier to handle more people. We have just taken stock of our food-supply and find to our joy that it is considerably larger than we realized. This means that we can enlarge that department, and with Rootie there it will be splendid, I think. I hate to let it go at all, and am going just the same Tuesday afternoons, but I know that it will soon be impossible for me to give up that much time. We hope to move ten families a week. This will mean pretty close calculations on time for all of us.

It is wonderful to feel that I may be able to be of some real use to some one for the first time in my life. I have not felt so strong and well and so well equipped for a winter as I do now, for a long time. We have laid in a supply of coal and wood, and are as cozy as can be. I am letting many little petty time-taking jobs slide along to some one else, and am just saving myself for the furniture above everything else. That sounds as if I was not doing any hard work. I truly am. We moved all the things from the store we call Maggi, and which is on Ernest Cresson, a little farther down, over to the rue Daguerre storehouse, and I can tell you it was some job for all of us — piling the things

in the car, and then unloading at the other end. Gay Kimberly's husband returned suddenly, so I had to run the car, as Rootie was out calling with a Red Cross man who wants to know the conditions of refugees living in Paris. (By the bye, a Maxwell car with a starter has been given us. I wish it was a Ford, on account of essence, but we must not be fussy, I suppose.)

This morning Rootie started for church early, and got a bath with a friend of hers who lives in a hotel which still has its hot water on Saturday and Sunday! I was, therefore, alone for the morning, and after the washing was counted and put away, and the salon tidied, and the pillows, which had raveled, had been sewn, I decided that I was going to pretend I was at home; so I got dressed as if for Sunday dinner at 378. I put on a nice waist and my pink sweater with the gray collar, which I made myself, and my earrings, and Aunt Sarah's ring. It was really lots of fun. I imagined what I would be doing if I was at home, and who would be there too. Rootie could not imagine what had struck me when she came in and found me all dressed up.

I wonder if it would interest you to hear what we did for one family in the way of moving? Rogeau is the name. We have had them on our

cards for quite a long time. It is a small family, a tuberculous man and his wife and little boy. We have been boarding the woman and child out in the country, while the man was in the hospital. This summer the woman came in to see us to ask if we could possibly let her have another month out in the country. We were fortunately able to do so, and when her husband came out of his hospital, he joined her in Saint-Prix, where she was boarding, and together they have found a little house at twenty-two francs a month, for the house and garden. They will each have separate rooms to sleep in, and the woman is most careful about cleaning and all that. Owing to our being able to give them the *meubles*, they were able to take the house at once, and last week I took out to them a table, two chairs, one stool, plates, knives, forks, spoons, a stove, basin, pail, dishtowels, pitcher, sheets, covers, — and extra nice light warm ones for the man, — pillow-cases, casserole, carpet, bathtowels, coffeepot, small pillow for man, refuse pail, coat-hangers, table-cover, and candle and candlestick (having sent three single beds by express). With these few things they can begin to live, and then they will gradually get more. The man has a little forge in an out house in the garden where he works, and has a chair in the sun. He mends

pails and pans. I am giving him a chaise-longue with Daddy's money, so that he can rest in between spells of work. I am so hoping that the air and sun will rebuild him as they have others. You would have been as touched as I was at their joy at the few things we brought them. You see they are really beginning to have their home together again. This is only one of so many interesting cases. Having no income except from the little work he does, they are not paying us anything for the things, although lots of other families are paying. If it is possible, it is so much better for them to pay *something*.

We are worried just now as to what we are going to do for stoves. There is a great shortage. And the way prices jump up from one week to another!! We calculated two weeks ago that every move costs us well over five hundred francs, with the beds. Now they are much more. Everything goes up two to three francs a week. Beds cost ninety francs for a double lit cage, with mattress and two pillows, where they used to be only seventy last spring. Single beds are fifty-nine instead of thirty-two. Stoves used to be fifteen to twenty-five francs new, and now we pay thirty for old ones and seventy for the new ones. Next week they are to be fifty per cent more, I was told. Lessiveuses are thirty-five, and

we have had to give them up, although I hope to change that, and give the few big things and no small things, — forks and knives and all that, — for a family can, after all, save and buy those things, and they never would be able to get either a buffet or lessiveuse. Mrs. H—— pays twenty-five to thirty-five francs for a second-hand buffet now, and she used to get a big, tall, new one for twenty-five. All the small things are about a franc more, pails and all such. Linen is terribly dear. Fortunately, we still have some unbleached linen from America for the sheets. When it goes, I don't know what we will do. They want nine francs apiece for the most slimsy cotton sheets here. I do not quite see what is going to happen if things keep on getting more and more expensive. What will stop it all? And I suppose Germany is richer than ever with her latest gains in Russia. What is going to happen?

Rootie says it is time to go to bed, and I guess she is right. Lots and lots of love.

Your very loving daughter,

MARJE.

XXVIII

FROM MARJORIE

12 Place Denfert-Rochereau, Paris, November 14, 1917.

DEAREST MOTHER AND DADDY: —

I hope that you will not worry about our being cold over here this winter. We will not be. First place, we find that we can heat the salon very nicely with a wood fire, and second, we are definitely to have our chauffage central the 15th. We have had hot water once already, and you would have laughed. You could n't see any one for the two days, for every one was having as many baths as possible. We will have the water right along after the heating begins.

I went to the movies for the first time in ages the other night. Sydney took Dulles and myself and we saw an excellent show: that Jap man, Sessue something (I bet Josey knows), and then some wonderful war pictures; the Zepps that they brought down the other day, close up, and most interesting. The tremendous size of them was what overwhelmed me. They look like a whole sugar factory burned up when they are

destroyed. It is certainly true that no nation but the German would or could afford to build them now. I wonder if the French will get any good ideas from the one which is not destroyed. The supremacy of the air seems to be the great hope of the Allies now. Sydney cheerfully tells us that the Boches have an aeroplane with six engines. Think of it. Also I believe that they have some new horrors to spring on us soon. I have been told by a Suisse-Français girl that they (the Germans) have had the best harvest they have had for years; also that their first Italian victory fell on one of their biggest fête days, so they are sure that God is with them. No one that I ever see over here feels that we could possibly win a military victory for several years, and then it would be an air victory. I can hardly believe that the people will be able to endure another three years. Last spring was nip and tuck keeping the French going, and if it had n't been for the rushing over of those troops to march through the streets on the 4th of July I hate to think what might have happened. At least, that is the way it seems to me. If Italy gives in, and it seems possible, as there is some sort of treachery there, and Russia is quite out of it, if she is n't worse, — on their side, I mean, — will the French hang on? Lots of people feel that all this

changing of cabinets (and we have another one to-day) means that Caillaux is the man who will be put in eventually. He is the last chance, as it were, and, if he is once in, it is all over, for he is supposed to be pro-German. Rootie has many friends of various grades in the army and navy, who blow in and out at times and fill us up with gossip: how the whole of America is full of German spies; how the new submarines carry three-inch guns and fight the Allied destroyers on equal terms as a result; how the Chemin des Dames offensive is completely successful; what they think is the reason for the complete hold-up of all Suisse mail and trains and many French ones; how many troops have gone to Italy, and so forth. It is more or less discouraging as a whole. Conditions here in Paris are about the same. The coal situation seems to be better handled. Most proprietors have been told by the Government that they must heat their tenants or not ask rent. There is plenty to eat still. Suisse chocolate is not to be had any more. Sugar seems to be scarce, but not as bad as last year. Butter and eggs are high, but one can buy them. The swell tea-houses are having difficulty to make their cakes, but they do just the same. A great deal of honey is used instead of sugar, I think. There were special provisions for con-

fitures being made this fall, so that I think we shall have all we want. There are still taxis to be seen about, but, although they have been restricted in what they can do to you in the way of flatly refusing to take you, still they can usually manage to make it so disagreeable for you that you prefer to walk. Gasoline is to be very, very scarce even in the army, I believe, next month, but fortunately we have a supply on hand. I shall be very glad to turn over the responsibility of the cars to H. soon, for there is quite a good deal to be done, and it grows more difficult to do it every day. Ford is completely mobilized now, and it is very difficult to have anything done at all.

Rootie says that we are going to have our pictures taken, and what she says usually goes, so you will probably get a picture of your beautiful daughter in uniform. Don't you dare show it to a soul if you do, though.

Rootie says to be sure to thank you very much for the toast-holder. We will use it a lot. Lots and lots of love to both of you, and all of you.

MARJE.

XXIX

FROM MARJORIE

Paris, January 1, 1918.

DEAREST MOTHER AND DADDY: —

If I could only *tell* you in words what our Christmas was like I would be so happy, but it's dreadfully hard to. First place, your wonderful packages came in plenty of time, and were grabbed by Rootie, who informed me that *she* was running our special, extra-private Christmas morning celebration, and for me to trust her!

We decided at the Vestiaire that we must have a tree for the refugee children, — our pet ones, at any rate, — and Mrs. Shurtleff was so pleased with the idea. We got a hall in the same building where Dr. S. used to have his meetings, and we had more fun decorating the tree ourselves, filling bags with candy which we bought after hours of standing in line at Potin's, and we gave two hundred refugee children the best Christmas party they ever had, I bet. We had a prestidigitator-man first, who was excellent, and who delighted the kids by getting enough

flags out of a hat to give each child one. After he was through, we dropped a curtain which was hiding the tree, and which looked very gorgeous with its candles and piles of presents heaped around the base, and bowing and smiling in front of the tree was Père Noël (Rootie), who gave each child two presents. They were passed cakes and candy, and even the mothers who were sitting around the edge of the room (one grown-up was allowed to each family) got some cake. Then, after they received their two gifts, which were all sorted according to ages, they came to the door with mothers and brothers and sisters and were presented with a bag of candy each, a Christmas card, and a muffler, and were sent home. You never saw such a well-behaved lot of children, so clean and so good, and *so* happy.

Monday night we went to bed early, — that is, I did, and Rootie sat up until all hours arranging things for the next day. When I woke up, I found that Rootie had ordered eggs for our breakfast, and had slipped into the other room and made a perfectly delicious piece of toast for me. We had such fun over breakfast, and then I was led into the next room where the mantelpiece was decorated with a huge clock with presents tied on by red ribbons. There

was a fire and lots of presents piled in front of it! All this when we had said we were not giving any presents this year! I almost cried! We sat down on our little stool, and I began opening all your lovely things. Oh, you were much too good to us! The candy was and is the best in the world. You don't know how we pick and choose and save the caramels till the end only. Rootie always goes down three layers at once, just to see what is underneath! Josey's dear little purse and the very effective picture of herself and her hair and ribbon were almost too much. Rootie was so pleased with your thought of her. We just had a beautiful Christmas morning together, and I can tell you we thought pretty nice things about our families who had taken all the trouble for us.

Rootie had every sort of a present for me. She had thought of everything that I have ever said I liked, or wanted to have. First place, some lovely little shell hairpins which are delightful. They fit your head so nicely. Then a lovely cyclamen plant; a dear little pot to hold a baby plant; a vase; a hearth-brush, for I get so cross with the one there is in the room now; a photograph of the two of us on the steps at Bourre, — which I believe she sent you, too, — with a calendar on it; also a calendar for the office and the

most delightful little machine that clips papers together, and which I have been longing for for ages! — also a drum because I have been saying I missed mine so: this one is about five inches across, and has the sticks attached, and saves you lots of trouble, for you use it like a watchman's rattle; a beautiful laundry-bag, which is also much needed, and a sachet. You never saw such a lovely pile of things, and every one something which I needed, and was n't she dear to take all that time for me! It seems I have been an awful nuisance while she has been getting the things together, because I insisted upon coming home when she was preparing them. I cannot tell you how all her thought of me touched and pleased me. It was just like Rootie to do it.

We had to go over to Miss B——'s at about eleven, for we were all to have our Christmas dinner there, — all us workers, I mean. I had ordered everything, and was generally in charge. Miss B—— lives in a charming little studio which has several of her pieces of sculpture in it, and is very delightful, anyway. She offered it to us and it did seem so much more homey than a hotel. She has a big, unfinished marble in the middle of the room which I had planned in my mind's eye to put aside while we dined, but I found out it weighs tons and would have to

have three or four men to move it, so we let it stay and we put our table behind it. We borrowed the table from the rue Daguerre storehouse, and tablecloths from the ameublement; also chairs and glasses; and with Rootie's yellow saucers and Fiskie's blue ones in between, and fruit in the middle, we made a very effective table.

I had ordered the whole dinner from Coute's, a store near by that has very good cooked things, and which offered to send in everything piping hot ready to eat. This last suggestion appealed to me, especially as Miss B—— has no gas, and cooks on her stove, which was built to heat, — not to cook. Rootie having charge of the decorations fixed up the place cards prettily, and arranged the fruit. We were fifteen. Every one arrived on time, but the dinner! I began to get nervous at about five minutes to one, for the meal was ordered at 12.30, and I was afraid it must have gone astray. Dulles and Mlle. Herzog volunteered to go to Coute's and try to find our dinner. After they had left, the brilliant thought occurred to me that maybe I had told them the wrong number of the street. It is 18, Bd. Edgar Quinet, 18 like the Vestiaire, but not like the Daguerre number, — 19, — and the more I thought it over the more sure I was that I had

sent the dinner to 19! This thought did not cheer the company, as there is a very large cemetery opposite Miss B——'s and goodness only knew where the number 19 might be, so I put on my fur coat and new hat, which is very tall, and therefore heavy, and started out to find number 19. I started slowly, but as I went farther and farther, I got more and more nervous, and began to trot and then to run. I arrived in front of 19, which was an exceptionally shady-looking stable, bar, hardware shop, just in time to see Coute's boy, on one of those bicycle-pushcart affairs, piking down the street!! You have no idea of what a feeling that gave me. He seemed to be going fifty miles a minute, and with him was our whole dinner!! I let out a war-whoop, and started after. That coat of mine which Aunty gave me is not patterned after a running-suit, and to say that it and my hat, which toppled over my eyes every minute, and the snow, which was just perfect for coasting, hampered me, is putting it mildly. However, there was nothing to do but to run, so I ran; and after about a block (which seemed three to me), I attracted his attention, and also that of all the population of the Latin Quarter. He stopped and was most agreeable; said he had looked everywhere for the right house, but had

found no trace. I did n't stop to argue, — I was so glad to see the pots and pans in that cart, — but I pointed out the way, and we returned triumphantly to 18. I can tell you it was a close call. Dulles and Mlle. Herzog met him on their way back, too, and held him up, but he had already left the food with us. It was delicious, in spite of its extra journey. Hors d'œuvres of pâtés de fois gras; then two big golden-brown turkeys stuffed with marrons; mashed potatoes all yellow with butter, and just the right consistency; peas cooked up with lettuce and sweetened just a little; great plates of delicious currant jelly (we could n't get cranberry sauce); a big bowl of celery salad; and brown gravy to go on the turkey. It was mighty good, I can tell you. We warmed things up a little while they began on the first course, then we shifted plates, four of us, like regular waiters. We had planned it all out beforehand, and Miss Curtis attacked the turkeys. She can carve like a whizz among all the other things that she does well. She made one bird go the round, and then there was plenty left of the second for Mrs. Shurtleff to take home some cold. You never saw a crowd enjoy their Christmas dinner more!

We had a surprise for them next. Hannah and I decided that Christmas was n't Christmas

without a plum pudding, so we scraped up three little already cooked plum puddings, which Mrs. Shurtleff had steamed for hours, Rootie and I gave the sugar we had saved this summer for a foamy sauce, and, although we cooked it too long, for I got so interested in eating my turkey that I forgot it, still it was so full of wine and sugar that it was *delicious*. We went to buy a little rum to burn on it, and found to our amusement that we must buy three big bottles, which we proceeded to do! (The new law requires that you buy at least two litres.) I wish you could see our room. It looks like a bar, for Mrs. Shurtleff also brought a bottle of cooking sherry for the sauce. Well, we poured enough wine on that pudding to light a half-dozen, and with holly in the center, it looked very gay and most Christmasy. Every one seemed to like it.

THEN we had VANILLA ICE-CREAM AND HOT CHOCOLATE SAUCE!!! Regular ice-cream just like home, and the best I ever tasted outside of our house. Oh, it was good! By the time we had done justice to this, we were all in the state where we preferred to stand up! Some of them went to Dr. Cabot's Christmas carol party, where they went from hospital to hospital singing for the blessés. I wonder how they sang! We certainly made enough noise, and I don't

think any one had a homesick thought, and that was what we were all scared of. Miss Sturgis was unable to come, and we missed her terribly. We made up a very nice plate of cold turkey, salad, jelly, and breadsticks for her, and armed with this and some ice-cream and sauce, we all went down to see her. We found her with a fire burning, and so we all sat around and talked and some of them slept, and then Mr. D——, a Red Cross man, blew in, and told us lots of interesting things about being on the commission for distributing German money for the German prisoners in Russia the first year of the war, and also of his more recent experiences in Italy. He was one of the men sent by the Red Cross with so much *actual cash* to help out there, and also lay plans for the future work. He was very interesting. We all stayed there until it was time to go back to the studio for a Welsh rabbit. I had to laugh when Miss Curtis asked if I knew how to make one. I said yes without thinking, and then realized that all I have ever done was to watch you. However, you know I would die before I would back out, so I went ahead with an expert air, and gave as exact an imitation of you as I could. I cut about the same size pieces of cheese, ladled out mustard with the cover of the tin, just the way you do,

and poured on beer in little professional dabs, every once in a while. Then I stirred and stirred, and although it gave me heart failure while it passed through the gummy, stringy, curdly stage, still it finally emerged in a smooth thick state, and I hastily broke an egg into it, and gave it a final beating and served it. Wonder of wonders, they said it was O.K.! Far be it from me to say it was luck! We had scrambled eggs, toast, and salad also, and last, but not *least*, we had "asti spumanti." Oh, it was good! We wanted it for dinner, but we could n't with the crowd, so we had it for supper. It was delicious.

I was lucky enough to have to go and see Madame Brunschwig, who is the great big-hearted woman here who has done so much for the housing of refugees. She started on her own backing herself, and she is wonderful. She let me sit beside her from 10 until 12.30 one day, and listen to her interview her people. It was so interesting to see how a Frenchwoman does it. She is so sharp, never misses a thing, very clear-headed, kind-hearted, and has that quick, wise power of decision which is so characteristic of Mrs. Shurtleff. It was very interesting to hear her say so many times just the things that I have heard Mrs. S. say. I feel quite sure that

their two judgments on a case would be the same. I think it is well worth noting that these two women have done what they have without any social-service training; they just use their heads and hearts and common sense. I am not yet convinced that one has to go to the Boston School for Social Workers to be a good worker.

The gasoline situation has been very serious over here lately; the story is that the American Government took all the gas that came into France for ten days because they were getting short, and they would not stand for the lavish use of gas which had been going on. Anyway, they have finally stopped bons of essence for private cars. Miss Curtis says that she has been told that the English have made a fuss, too, for they have not had any private cars for a long, long time. We got ours for the work all right. It was reduced, but still we will have enough if we are careful, I believe. I have had lots of fun initiating Hannah into the game of "trying-to-get-gasoline-in-Paris."

The pastry-shops are really to be closed, I guess; the American ones have been stopped from making any kind of cake and even corn-bread. We got a big chocolate cake at Rebattet's Saturday, but I think it is the last. I am glad of it, for people at home are doing so much it seems

to me we ought to be cut down over here, too. I shall be especially glad if they stop all this bonbon-making; it must use oodles of sugar. (I think we have enough for a few months, and then we will be home.) I imagine that it is the American Government that has brought pressure to bear on this, and it is a good thing.

Hannah and I saw some of the cement boats being built the other day, when we were outside of Paris; they looked fine. Very low in the water, just like regular barges, but, of course, they must be built in a much shorter space of time. I wonder if they are really using them as much as they expected to?

It seems to be a very critical time just now for the Allies. Lots of people are depressed and talking very gloomily. Evidently the Caillaux affair is pretty delicate. The English Government has been insulted, and it is up to the French to do away with the gentleman in question. They called the class of 1919 the day before yesterday, and also recalled that of '91, which sounds as if they wanted men. All the Americans we see speak cheerfully of three to five years' preparation, but I can't believe it. Is n't it awful to think of Padua being bombarded? Will there be anything beautiful left after this war? Even Jerusalem. We have heard

such wild stories about how they have defended Venice from air attacks, that there are lots and lots of balloons up over it, and that they have wires stretched between each two, and, of course, a wire, even if pretty fine, will wreck an aeroplane. It seems that these wires can't be seen very well. I do not know whether this is true or not, but a very nice doctor who had just come back from there told us. By the by, he is the doctor who now gives us one afternoon a week for our refugees; then Miss Neivin — one of the workers, and who has had some first-aid training at home — can go into the homes afterwards and follow up the cases.

I wonder if the Boches have really got some new atrocity to spring on us. Every one seems to think that they have. I can't see how they can have time to think up anything else. Did you hear about the mirrors used on submarines so that they are very hard to see? It sounds plausible.

Lots and lots of love to you all. Tell John-on-the-corner, Mary Devlin, and all that I am looking forward to seeing them all in May. Tell Mrs. Dow that her candy is the best ever, and that it is in much better condition when she packs it in lead paper and in a tin box. Lots and lots of love again, and here's hoping that

you are still alive after the eleventh page of rambling of your very-affectionate-and-looking-forward-to-being-home-soon

Daughter,

MARJE.

XXX

FROM ESTHER

Thursday evening, January 31, 1918.

DEAREST FAMILY: —

Last night was *it* — the biggest raid they've ever had on Paris. When I think that at nine o'clock I was sitting up in bed with a sniffling cold, bemoaning the fact that I could n't seem to write anything but the stupidest sort of letter when I had a whole week packed full of events to tell you about — when I think of *that,* I don't know how I shall begin to tell you all to-night.

Every one has been expecting an air raid on Paris for quite a time, and Sunday evening we were all set for it, for the moon was full, and it was the Kaiser's birthday, and we worked our intuitions to the utmost. Last night, when I snuggled down in my warm bed, I had forgotten all such possibilities.

Suddenly I heard that siren that means one thing and one thing only. It's a dismal, foreboding sound. There's also an "alerte," a sort of horn that blows at the same time, that sounds as though a fiend were putting his whole lungs

into it. I did n't stir at first because I thought it might be a false alarm, but the siren and the alerte kept it up and kept it up, so that Marje and I, for curiosity's sake, slipped into our fur coats and went out on the balcony. We saw a few aeroplanes and rocket signals and heard a distant booming of guns. The street lights went out one by one and the tramways rumbled ponderously home from their last nocturnal journey.

It was an ideal night — the moon had waned only a little and the stars were bright; but never did "the luster of midday to objects below" give such a desperate feeling of defenselessness as when we looked out across the Place and saw each tree and building stand out distinctly.

The guns grew much louder. We turned to each other and said, "This is something new — we've never heard anything half so near in any other raid." We were thrilled. We went across to the other apartment to see if Hilda and Gay and Fiskey were taking it all in, and just as we stepped into Gay's room, two terrific crashes came. We all rushed out on Fiskey's balcony and stood there trembling with excitement. She and Hilda said that there had been two great flashes; Marje and I had been in Gay's room just at that instant, and were as mad as anything to have missed something.

The five of us took our posts on the same balcony, where we had a superb view. Way to the left was the Eiffel Tower, invisible at that distance, but certainly one of the goals of any air attack on account of being the greatest wireless station. To the north lay the Place de la Concorde, with the heads of the Inter-Allied Conference resting, perhaps uneasily, in the Hôtel Crillon. All the way to the Place d'Italie, in the extreme east, we had the panorama of the sky, and you may believe there were five pairs of eyes that never missed a flash or a light.

We counted as many as fifteen aeroplanes at once, flying in groups of threes or fours or widely separated. How thrilling to think that every little light meant a warm living, thinking, human being straining to the utmost — some for defense — some for destruction. We made wild speculations — were they French or Boche? Why should any have lights? The Boches must certainly want to come unobserved, and the French must certainly want to chase them without being seen. How can either side tell which is friend and which is enemy, lights or no lights? How can even an anti-aircraft gun hope to hit a tiny moving plane way up in the air? How can a moving plane hit another in the dark? Which of the deep booms were guns and which bombs?

The Air Raid on Paris o

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Night of January 30, 1918

This thought was dreadful. Bombs actually being dropped in the suburbs of Paris on buildings, on our friends, on the refugees, on *anybody*.

Suddenly a flash lit up the Place — the trees stood silhouetted against a red glare and an explosion thundered out. It seemed just across the Place. I never shall forget it. We thought of the garage with the three Fords sleeping peacefully in it — but the flash was certainly farther to the left than Boulevard Saint-Jacques. We were speculating as to how far away in feet and inches it had hit, when *bang! bang!* — more bombs: funniest thing — we all took a backward step into Hannah's room. We saw a plane with a red light on it — certainly a Boche — fire his mitrailleuse and then down fell another bomb. It was fascinating to see him so plainly, but as the sound of his engine became louder and we could see him flying towards us, one charge of fear went through me. To feel that an enemy is flying right over you, ready any second to drop a bomb that will blow you and Marje and people you love and the house and the street and everything to flinders; to know that you can't do anything — that not even pulling the bedclothes up over your head is sure protection; to have to wait, wait, wait while you hear that throbbing motor, and then wait again to see whether he'll

let go that instant or not — well, as Marje says, "It may be all right for the soldiers, but I feel distinctly like 'women and children.'"

It lasted two hours, and we stood there in our catch-as-catch-can costumes, trying not to feel the cold stone of the balcony through our kid night slippers. We were sure we smelled gunpowder, and some one suggested gas bombs — not exactly pleasant. The hum of aeroplanes was continual and the explosion of guns frequent. When one would be especially loud, some one would call out, "Attitudes of defense, girls — turn up your coat collars — here comes the Crown Prince!" "Have you on your Boston grips, Marje? — if so, no metal can touch you!" "Here, here, you great bonehead Boche, you came to get Lloyd George and Pershing and General Foch and that crowd — don't break up our happy little home life!"

I got too tired and cold to stand out there any longer, so I took a nap on Hannah's bed until the bugle of "All danger's past" blew. You can't imagine how that sounds until once you've seen the Germans come toward you and have felt yourself an insignificant, but a very much concerned, target. You never heard anything so full of joy!

We adjourned to Hilda's room and the prac-

tical spirits of the crowd soon had some solid alcohol burning and some Whitman's instantaneous chocolate in the saucepan. It certainly went to the spot with toasterettes as an accompaniment — and still another accompaniment of the bugle call growing fainter in the distance.

We went to bed, and oh, how we slept! We have wanted to experience a real raid and now we have, and we've had one and that's enough.

This morning the maids brought in wild tales with our breakfast. The École des Mines had been hit, on the Boulevard Saint-Michel. The morning papers said nothing. As the workers came strolling in to the Vestiaire, heavy-eyed from lack of sleep, but bursting with questions, we could get little definite news.

Mlle. Herzog and I started out hot-foot for the École des Mines, hoping that the work would not grudge us half an hour for satisfying our curiosity. We found a big crowd, managed by a policeman standing in front of the École, in which every window was broken. So was every window on both sides of the Boulevard for several hundred feet, and a big ragged hole beside the asphalt showed where the bomb had fallen. Things seem so different in the daytime — there were all the commonplace buildings, the tram, the policeman, the landmarks that we know so

well, and yet the sidewalks were covered with broken glass and limbs of trees, and that big hole had been made by a real live Boche!

It seemed fairly near home too — the spot is about as far from us as three New York short blocks, perhaps a little farther; but it does n't seem so far away to drop a bomb when some one has come all the way from Germany.

During the day we heard of more places hit — a hospital near Place d'Italie; a house where one child was buried alive; a cabman was killed somewhere, but not his horse. The worst damage was on the Avenue de la Grande Armée, where a three-story house was ruined. We hope to go over to-morrow at lunch-time and see. Thank Heaven, they missed the Arc de Triomphe.

Doris Nevin, who had supper here with us to-night, went over to the Concorde at the end of the raid last night and saw the wreckage of a French machine which was burned up.

The papers have headlines and long blank columns, so that we know nothing. They acknowledge twenty victims, though. The Germans always attack two or three nights running, and the strain to-day has been the knowledge that they would come again to-night. But now one thing I know: that to-night Paris is deep in

a fog that nothing can penetrate; that a mist which seems hardly more than air is protecting us as neither iron nor steel can do; and that no German can follow the shining rivers and lakes to attack us. Oh, to feel so safe! It makes me think of the Great Peace we shall have at the end of the war. If we can only *all* give our strength to have that come soon.

With much love,

ESTHER.

THE END

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